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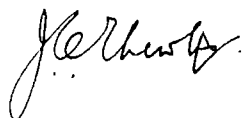
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The Peace Policy of Spain, 1596-1604 is an examination of the motives of the government of Philip II and of Philip III in bringing to an end a long and exhausting war with three enemies - France, England and the United Provinces. It is based almost entirely upon original manuscript sources, most of which have not previously been studied in depth or for the period as a whole. The intellectual climate in which decisions were made, the political state of the Court, the efficiency of the handling of foreign affairs, the dramatis personae and their attitude towards Spain and her resources are first described by way of introduction. Relations with the Low Countries are then examined so as to provide the back-cloth to the rest of the foreign policy, and the war against the Dutch is shewn as being Spain's true priority. The chapters on the negotiations that led up to the Treaty of Vervins (1598), on the Saluzzo crisis (1600) and on the cold war that culminated in the Biron conspiracy (1602) shew the working-out of a new policy towards France. Anglo-Spanish affairs occupy the chapters on the failure to find a naval or, in the English succession question, a diplomatic solution to the problem of England's hostility, and those on the preliminaries and course of the Treaty of London (1604). New light is thrown on to the efficiency and range of Spain's governmental and diplomatic machinery, as on to her sense of imperial mission; some of the customary strictures upon the government's vapidity and indifference are strongly criticized; and Spain's great reluctance to face the economic and military fact that she had outgrown her strength emerges with clarity.

UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM

FACULTY OF ARTS

Examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis

The Peace Policy of Spain, 1596-1604

by

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FOREWORD.

The present thesis is not primarily intended to be an account of the diplomatic exchanges that concerned Spain between 1596 and 1604. Rather, it is an attempt to discover the motives that lay behind them and so in some measure to comprehend the mentality of the makers of Spanish foreign policy at a crucial time. Consequently, although the information contained in ambassadorial reports has been found valuable, much greater use has been made of governmental memoranda, consultas and royal despatches. Moreover, by looking at the foreign policy of these years as a whole and examining each decision in the context of all the decisions that surrounded it, I hope that I have been able to achieve a view more balanced than would have been the case had I concentrated simply upon Spain's relations with any one of her European neighbours. The period is particularly rewarding for a number of reasons. In the first place, the remarkably ample documentation, chiefly to be found in the Archivo General de Simancas, presents a perhaps unique opportunity to trace in considerable detail the mental processes of the King and his closest advisers. Secondly, the last years of the reign of Philip II and the first years of that of Philip III mark an extremely important turning-point in Spanish fortunes and policy. After a half-century's uninterrupted extension of imperial horizons, Spain was forced drastically to reduce her commitments. The mental stresses that resulted from the attempt to graft new realities on to old assumptions repay study: for, if nothing else, they help us to see what, in the end, was considered vital and what merely desirable by Spanish statesmen. In the third place, until very recently there has previously been a marked lack of detailed scholarly investigation of the period in question. Scholars have instead tended to make certain assumptions: that Philip III was mild-mannered and uninterested in his royal duties; that the eighteenth-century English assessment of his favourite, the Duke of Lerma - "agreeably to the mildness

of his own disposition and his love of magnificence, he was of opinion that the dignity of the Spanish monarchy was best maintained by peace, pomp and parade" (1) - is largely correct; and that Spanish foreign policy faithfully reflected the supposed failings of them both. Considerations of time and space have prevented me from taking greater samples of archival material outside Spain, as from pursuing the story up to its culmination in the Twelve Years' Truce, made with the Dutch in 1609: but I hope that I have been able to go some way towards filling a gap.

At the end of so long a period of research, the list of my obligations is considerable. First place must go to my supervisor, Dr. Peter Brightwell, who first aroused my interest in the study of foreign policy, and whose comments and suggestions I have invariably found stimulating and valuable; Dr. D. M. Loades has continued the labour that he began whilst I was still an undergraduate, and I should like to express here my gratitude to both him and his wife; Dr. Eberhard Straub of the University of Munich, in many long conversations and over many flesh-pots, brought to my attention themes that would not otherwise have occurred to an English-trained historian; Don Modesto Ulloa of Montevideo provided welcome and useful information about Spanish royal finances; Professor H. S. Offler, Professor W. R. Ward and their colleagues in the Department of Modern History have always shewn me every kindness, as have the successive Masters and Officers of Van Mildert College; the Department of Education and Science provided me with the Major State Studentship that enabled me to carry out the great bulk of my research; the electors appointed by the Anglo-Spanish Cultural Foundation awarded me the Don Vicente Cañada Blanch Senior Fellowship in the University of London for the session 1973-1974; Mrs. Anne Harbin has kindly typed my manuscript;

(1) Watson 421. The standard view was well expressed by Antonio Cánovas del Castillo in La Casa de Austria (Ediciones Marte, Barcelona, 1971), pp. 127 seqq. The work of Professor Lynch and of Dr. Patrick Williams (q.v. infra) has called it into question at certain important points.

nor can I fail to recall with affection the help and friendship shewn to me by Don Amando Represa and his colleagues at the Archivo General de Simancas. For help of a different kind, I am indebted to my parents; to my friends of the Hogar-Colegio El Porvenir, Madrid; to Doña Trinidad Fernández Sanjuán and her family; and to the Revdo Miguel de Oláiz Fresno, Pbo (IERE), his wife and daughter. To all of them, my deepest and sincerest thanks. And on a personal note, I should like to echo the Psalmist: "except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it."

J. C. T.



EXPLANATORY NOTES.

The following abbreviations have been used in the footnotes:

AGR	Archives Générales du Royaume de Belgique, Brussels.
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas, Valladolid.
AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional, Madrid.
BN	Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid.
BRAH	<u>Boletin de la Real Academia de la Historia.</u>
CJH	Consejo y Juntas de Hacienda.
CMH	<u>The Cambridge Modern History.</u>
CODOIN	<u>Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España.</u>
CSP Sp	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Spanish.</u>
CSP V	<u>Calendar of State Papers, Venetian.</u>
DHE	<u>Diccionario de historia de España:</u> 2nd edition: 3 vol: Madrid, 1968.
E	Sección Estado.
EHR	<u>The English Historical Review.</u>
GA	Sección Guerra Antigua.
LM	Lettres missives.
nd	no date.
PEA	Papiers d'Etat et de l'Audience.
PRO	The Public Record Office, London.
qvi	<u>quod vide infra</u>
qvs	<u>quod vide supra</u>
RBPhH	<u>Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire.</u>
Sarum	<u>Calêndar of the Mss of the Most Honourable the Marquis of Salisbury, KG.</u>
SEG	Secrétairerie d'Etat et de Guerre.
sf	<u>sin foliar.</u>
v	<u>vide.</u>
VM	<u>Vuestra Majestad.</u>
Vm	<u>Vuestra merced.</u>

VS      Vuestra señoría.  
SM      Su Majestad/Sa Majesté.  
SS      Su Santidad/Sa Sainteté.

The spelling of the original documents has been modernized in accordance with the norms of the Real Academia de la Lengua, and all translations are my own, except where otherwise indicated.

Dates are given in New Style, and the year is assumed to have started on 1st January, except where otherwise indicated.

References have been abbreviated as much as possible: AGS E2023/3, for example, signifies "Archivo General de Simancas, sección Estado, legajo 2023, folio 3".

The full titles of printed works have not generally been cited in the footnotes.

## INTRODUCTION

### (i) The Spanish World-Picture

In his acute essay on the Spanish character, El español y los siete pecados capitales, Fernando Díaz Plaja makes no apology for devoting proportionately more space to the sin of pride than to any other. The Spaniard has always suffered criticism on this account, no less in the sixteenth than in any other century. The fact was not lost upon writers of the former time:

"There is one fault that certain foreign countries ascribe to Spain: they say that she is arrogant, proud, provocative, exuberant, insufferable, hyper-active, and that for this she has earned herself hatred and enmity - though they all afterwards recognize her as being, after themselves, the best nation in the world. But to my mind these harsh criticisms are the source of much glory to the Spaniards, for they spring from the critics' simple realization that they are so beset with difficulties themselves and so far behind, and thus think themselves so inferior in everything; and this has made the Spaniards fly so high - indeed, out of sight."

(una sola falta imputan algunas naciones a la española: dicen de ella que es arrogante, soberbia, atrevida, briososa, mal sufrida e inquieta, con que ha granjeado odio y enemistad; aunque cada una después de sí la reconoce por la mejor del mundo. Mas a mi parecer de esta calumnia resulta mucha gloria a los españoles, pues no tiene más fundamento que verlos tan encumbrados y perdidos de vista los calumniadores, y el considerarse a sí tan inferiores en todo, lo que a los españoles hizo volar tan alto y desaparecérselos. (1) )

In the Golden Age, Spain seemed to have a good deal to be proud of. The growth of her power had been one of the wonders of the epoch. From a group of unstable rival kingdoms, Ferdinand and Isabella had begun, however imperfectly, to lay the foundations of an empire. Castile and Aragon had used their united forces to win a number of remarkable successes. The Moorish kingdom of Granada was captured in 1492; in the same year, Columbus discovered the New World; in 1505, Ferdinand's possession of the kingdom

(1) Salazar, vol. I, book I, title I, section xx.

of Naples was recognized by his French rival. The enthusiasm of contemporary intellectuals was perhaps pardonable: beati oculi qui vident quod videtis, wrote one. (2) The Spaniards had regained their self-confidence.

The effects of the reign of the Catholic Kings are especially noticeable in the foreign policy of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain. The marriage that Ferdinand arranged between Joanna the Mad and the Archduke Philip the Fair was to entangle Spain still more in the diplomatic and military conflicts of the rest of Europe. Charles V, in his dual role as King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, forced Spain to look outwards as never before. France's hostility towards the Spanish monarch, already present in the previous reign, was exacerbated by the immensity of Charles' empire. Because, therefore, Charles' fight was to some extent Spain's fight, large sums of money were sent to help him on his campaigns. After the suspicion of Charles' early years, Spain grew to be proud of the fact that her ruler was also Holy Roman Emperor - witness the hope that Philip, the Prince of Asturias, would also inherit the imperial title (3). But in one important respect, her outlook was bounded by the Iberian Peninsula. Despite the fact that, for all his many commitments, Charles spent at least half his reign in Spain, his absences were greatly disliked (4). Spain was to be satisfied in this respect only with his successor: who, although his father's mantle had fallen upon him as the heir to the best parts of the Habsburg inheritance - Spain, the New World, Italy and the Low Countries - between 1559 and his death in 1598 never once left Spain.

Philip's responsibilities were numerous and cosmopolitan. Whilst his uncle, Ferdinand, had succeeded to the Holy Roman Empire and the struggle against German Protestants and the Turk, Philip was left with the perhaps more onerous task of guarding his far-flung possessions. His realms in the

(2) Cepeda 130.

(3) Fernández Alvarez 132.

(4) Jover Carlos V... passim.

New World, greatly augmented by his succession to the crown of Portugal in 1580, were increasingly under attack from French, English and Dutch privateers and clandestine traders. He was obliged to combat the threat posed by Christendom by the Turk in the eastern Mediterranean. His power in the Low Countries was threatened by rebellion, Protestantism and the intervention of greedy and envious neighbours. His religious principles encouraged him to look to the decaying state of Roman Catholicism in England, Scotland and France. His sense of justice made him lay his family's claims to the throne of France. Having just failed in an attempt to invade England, by 1589 he was warring on three fronts - France, Flanders and Italy.

His outlook, and that of his subjects, was nevertheless far from cosmopolitan. Spain's collective ideology in our period was firmly rooted in a passionate belief that an ineluctable historical process had marked her out from her fellows. The loss of the imperial dignity to the cadet branch of the royal house mattered little: for Spain was the elect nation. She had been founded by Tubal, son of Japhet and grandson of Noah, and numbered Hercules amongst her rulers (5). The real starting-point for her glorious history was invariably taken as being the entry of the Goths into the peninsula and the Emperor Honorius' acknowledgement that Alaric lawfully possessed Spain by right of conquest. Great play was made of the utter respectability of the arrangement - "since the time when we first had kings, we Spaniards have never known or recognized any emperor who was not at the same time our own monarch" (6). When the Roman Empire in the West fell, Spain was left as the oldest-established kingdom. Admittedly, the rule of the Gothic kings had ended with Roderick's defeat at the hands of the Moorish invaders - some said because of his adultery, others because of treachery: but their line had continued. Seven hundred and eighty

(5) Salazar, vol. I, book I, title I, section i.

(6) López Madera 9. "Los españoles desde que tuvimos reyes nunca conocimos ni reconocimos algún emperador sino siendo juntamente rey nuestro."

cabalistic years were to elapse before Ferdinand and Isabella could revenge their ancestors (7). The final portion of the ancient inheritance was restored when, in 1580, Philip II took possession of Portugal:

"all the Gothic possessions and kingdoms were joined together under the Catholic King Philip II, who thereby became ruler of all Spain, there not having been one such for more than 850 years since the fall of Roderick, the last King of the Goths."

(todos estos reinos y señoríos se juntaron en el rey católico Don Felipe segundo de este nombre con que vino a ser señor de toda España no habiéndolo sido antecesor alguno suyo por más de 850 anos que pasaron desde la pérdida del rey Roderico último de los godos.(8) )

Philip, whose Gothic blood had been fortified by the infusion of that of the Habsburgs, the other respectable family of the West, deserved the respect due to the monarch of the oldest kingdom in Christendom (9).

The vital force in this historical pattern was the supposed purity of Spanish Christianity. The faith was popularly believed to have been brought to Spain by S. James the Great (Santiago) within eleven years of the Crucifixion, and to have been further strengthened by the personal evangelism of S. Peter and, especially, S. Paul (10). From these beginnings, it had gone from strength to strength. Arianism had quickly been abandoned by the Goths, and the baptism of their kings marked the beginning of a long, seemingly endless, series of godly princes. Early and venerable councils were held in Spain under their aegis. Above all, the country seemed abundantly to have brought forth the fruits of the Spirit: "there is scarcely a settlement of importance in Spain which has not been enriched by the triumphant blood of great and glorious martyrs, or which has no famous local saints" (11). During the sixteenth century alone, Spain had

(7) Garibay II xix.

(8) Salazar, Vol. I, book I, title I, section iv.

(9) López Madera 33, 47.

(10) López Madera 36, 38.

(11) López Madera 40. "Apenas se hallará pueblo de nombre en España que no haya sido regado con triunfante sangre de martirios soberanos o que no tenga santos muy señalados naturales."

greatly contributed to the strength of Roman Catholicism: in learning, by Cisneros' great new university at Alcalá; in evangelism, by Loyola's Jesuit order; in mysticism and spirituality by, amongst many others, Teresa of Avila. The constant and all-pervasive vigilance of the Inquisition, which was not afraid to prosecute the Spanish primate himself, ensured that contrary opinions were effectively weeded out. With considerable pride, a seventeenth-century writer could exclaim, "Seek in the entire sphere of Spanish influence a tolerated heretic or a concealed error ... Spain is the garden of Jesus Christ" (12).

At once the greatest sign of Spanish faith and of divine favour was the reconquista. For eight centuries, the Spanish Christians had seemed to have a sole aim: to oust the Moor from their country. The capture of Granada in 1492 therefore appeared of transcendental importance, to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers as much as to immediate contemporaries. The claim that the Almighty looked favourably upon the unparalleled valour and perseverance of his Spanish children seemed vindicated. Mariana, writing in 1601, saw the completion of the reconquista as the basis for all the glories that he had seen in his time, as his soliloquy on the Catholic Kings' triumphal entry into the city of Granada shews:

"They gazed at them as though they were more than men, as though they were sent from above for the health of Spain. And indeed it was they who established once again the justice that had previously decayed and become corrupt. They promulgated good laws for the government of their peoples and the determining of law-suits. They gave new life to religion and the faith and established public peace at home and abroad, quietening discord and disturbance. They extended their power, not only in Spain but at the same time also to the ends

(12) Quoted in Jover 1635... 431. "Buscad en todo el orbe español un hereje permitido, un error disimulado ... España jardín es de Jesucristo."

of the world. A point much to be praised is that they distributed rewards and honours, of which there are many and of great value in Spain - not for the merits of lineage nor because of base favour, but in accordance with the merits of each man; and in this way they encouraged their subjects to devote themselves to virtue and to learning. There is no need to enumerate the benefits that have resulted from all this: they are obvious. If we are honest, where are more learned or more saintly bishops to be found? Where more sagacious or more upright judges? It is true that, before this period, there had been few learned Spaniards: but who can count the Spaniards who thenceforth have advanced themselves in all sorts of learning and erudition?"

(mirábanlos como si fueran más que hombres y como dados del cielo para la salud de España. A la verdad ellos fueron los que pusieron en su punto la justicia, antes de su tiempo estragada y caída. Publicaron leyes muy buenas para el gobierno de los pueblos y para sentenciar los pleitos. Volvieron por la religión y por la fe, fundaron la paz pública, sosegadas las discordias y alborotos, así de dentro como de fuera. Ensacharon su señorío, no solamente en España sino también en el mismo tiempo se extendieron hasta lo postrero del mundo. Lo que es mucho de alabar, repartieron los premios y dignidades, que los hay muy grandes y ricos en España, no conforme a la nobleza de los antepasados ni por favor de cualquier que fuese, sino conforme a los méritos que cada uno tenía, con que despertaron los ingenios de sus vasallos para darse a la virtud y a las letras. De todo esto cuanto provecho haya resultado, no hay para que decirlo; la cosa por si misma y los efectos lo declaran. Si va a decir verdad, ¿en qué parte del mundo se hallarán sacerdotes y obispos ni más eruditos ni más santos? ¿dónde jueces de mayor prudencia y rectitud? Es así, que antes de estos tiempos pocos se pueden contar de los españoles señalados en ciencia; de aquí adelante ¿quién podrá declarar cuan grande ha sido el número de los que en España se han aventajado en toda suerte de letras y erudición? (13) )

The year of the conquest of Granada brought with it the great reward. Columbus' discovery gave Spain another mission, even more glorious than that which she had just completed.

"It was not the will of Almighty God that the invincible might of the Spaniards, who for so many centuries had fought against the Moorish enemies of our holy faith, should grow stagnant now that the



main part of the struggle had come to an end, but that they should always fight against the heathen to the glory of the faith: wherefore He ordained the discovery of the New World, full of idolaters who had not seen the light of salvation. And now that matters at home had been dealt with, Divine Providence gave the Spaniards a new, previously unknown world so that they might fight unceasingly in the extension of the catholic faith."

(no quería el omnipotente Dios que las invencibles fuerzas de los españoles que en tantos centenares de años habían peleado contra los moros, enemigos de nuestra santa fe ya que en España lo esencial de su guerra se había acabado que tampoco dende en adelante estuviesen ociosas sino siempre peleasen contra los paganos en el ensalzamiento de la fe por lo cual ordenó este descubrimiento del nuevo mundo lleno de gentes idólatras carecientes de la lumbre de la salvación ... y ahora que lo doméstico era concluído permitió la divina providencia darles un nuevo mundo antes ignorado para que incesablemente pugnasen en el aumento de la fe católica. (14) )

In return, the conquistadores were to open up territories of undreamed-of extent and wealth: the Spanish empire was to become bigger and richer than any other ever known, superseding even that of ancient Rome (15). If, therefore, Spain were faithful to her divine mission, what greatness would be hers in the future?

But could all this be considered congruent with the natural law so much stressed in orthodox Thomism? To Las Casas' passionate assertion that it could not came the calm reply of the Dominican, Vitoria. If the inhabitants of a country had abominable practices, attacked peaceful settlers, prevented the preaching of the Gospel or were ruled by those who offended thus, the use of force against them was justified. If, moreover, the rulers had been expressly condemned by duly-constituted authority - the Roman Catholic Church - the same held true (16). According to Vitoria's view, therefore, although heathen and heretic were not per se incapable of valid rule, they were bound to offend these four precepts. By 1584,

(14) Garibay vol. II, book xix, section i.

(15) López Madera 66.

(16) Vitoria, esp pp. 100-116.

Vitoria's post facto theories were supplanted by something more speculative. In lectures given in that year the Jesuit Suárez put forward the just defence of the innocent as a proper reason for intervention (17). For him, religious wars were for the natural right of others; and he needed to make no mention of papal sentences of deposition as a necessary prerequisite. From this theoretical basis, Spain would be justified in intervening wherever Roman Catholicism was not in full flourish. Herein we may see the origins of what a modern Spanish scholar has termed a "White House policy", which forced Spain to fight in defence of her proudly-held ideology (18).

Abroad, there seemed ample cause for concern. Spain's opinion of her neighbours was predictably low. López Madera, throughout his jingoistic work, was constantly at pains to point out the historic inferiority of France. Neither in antiquity nor in virtue was she to be compared with Spain. Her Christianity had come much later, with the preaching of S. Denis, and had not taken so firm a hold. Whereas Spain had consistently persecuted the Jews, Philip Augustus of France had favoured them (19). In more recent times, France had been foremost in frustrating Spain's goldly policies. Her king, Francis I, had allied with the Turk, and was an oath-breaker; her current claimant, Henry of Navarre, was a relapsed and excommunicated heretic. England, too, was to be despised. Her monarchs had ousted the authority of the Pope, nor was her Protestantism even genuine: Philip II, during the time of his unhappy marriage with Mary Tudor, had become convinced that the Englishman's religion was that of a time-server. The Dutchman was a rebel and a Calvinist; the Protestant German a friend of Turks. Small wonder, therefore, that these insincere and spiritually-corrupt neighbours should fight so bitterly against the Spanish greatness

(17) Perena 27-33, 90.

(18) Sánchez Albornoz II, 490, 574.

(19) López Madera 39, 45.

that they envied and that by their very nature they could never hope to achieve. Significantly, Herrera's Historia General del Mundo, published in 1601, saw the "mala inclinación" of Spain's enemies as being in direct proportion to their Protestantism (20). Peace could only return to Europe when all men recognized the pax romana that was presided over by the Pope and protected by the Catholic King.

(ii) Kings, Councillors and Ministers Abroad

Spain's ideology was entrusted to willing and faithful keepers. Philip II has long been regarded as the embodiment of pride and zeal for Roman Catholicism, and with some justice. The instructions that he drew up for his son in 1597 are imbued with an exalted religious fervour. Besides urging him to undertake no task before hearing daily Mass, he expounded his theory of kingly service:

"Be assured, my son, that no evil thing will harm you if you are obedient to our holy religion and follow, love and defend it with all your heart. You will win many crowns of glory if, in doing this duty, you should lose the earthly crown that I shall leave you. For if you present yourself to the battle as the hardy champion to defend our sacred religion, though you lose your kingdom, God will give you the glory that is established and which alone we should desire; and know that, if you do all this, I promise you on God's behalf that He never yet failed the good king who, jealous for His holy religion and the honour of His holy Name and inflamed with this desire, braves the greatest peril: for He brings him out of the peril, immeasurably augments his earthly possessions, and assures him of those that are eternal."

(Debéis estar cierto, hijo, que no habrá cosa que mal os avenga si a nuestra santa religión obedecéis, seguís y amáis y defendéis con todo vuestro corazón; muchas coronas de gloria hallaréis si la terrena que

(20) Herrera was cronista mayor de las Indias and cronista de Castilla; his book was dedicated to the Count of Miranda.

os dejaré perdiéseis en esta demanda, porque si campeón extorzado os presentáis a la batalla por defender nuestra religión sagrada aunque perdáis el reino os dará Dios la gloria que es lo fijo y lo único que debemos desear y creed que de parte de Dios os lo prometo si así lo hiciéreis además que jamás faltó Dios al buen rey que celoso de su sagrada religión y de la honra de su santísimo nombre se aventura inflamado de este deseo al mayor peligro, pues de el lo saca y acrecienta en sumo grado sus bienes temporales y tiene como asegurados los eternos. (21) ).

But influences other than that of religion had their effect upon him. As a small boy, he was noted for his wilfulness, thus shewing himself a true son of his Portuguese mother - who had refused to demean herself by groaning in childbirth (22). He was capable of imprisoning his son and heir, of submitting his primate and his first secretary (Carranza and Antonio Pérez) to judicial process, and of ordering that blasphemers amongst the oarsmen of the galleys that fought at Lepanto be thrown overboard (23). His father, Charles V, had subjected him to a rigorous education and at various times wrote long and detailed moral and political instructions for his better guidance. Perhaps the precept that he most took to heart was that which Charles had given to him in 1548: "you must keep hold of what is yours in order to avoid greater risks" (24). This was to apply, not only to his territorial possessions, but also to affairs of state. Philip did not delegate responsibility willingly; and his one departure from the rule, Antonio Pérez, was terribly punished (25). With this one lapse, he kept firm hold of the reins of power. Because of his sedentary habits, he was able to devote far more time to the business of government than had his father, and he laboriously filled the margins of the documents presented to him with often illegible and usually banal comments. A lover of solitude and austerity, having bought and pulled down the two mansions adjacent to his estate at Aranjuez, he spent three million ducats on a vast retreat, more monastery than palace, at El Escorial (26). From his

(21) BN 10623.

(22) Pfandl 44.

(23) Fernández Alvarez 217.

(24) Fernández Alvarez 105.

(25) Marañón.

(26) Pfandl 365.

writing-desk in this remote corner of Europe (27) he attempted to manage his vast interests. Although he was not devoid of lighter traits - witness his taste for horticulture - perhaps Hume's verdict is the most accurate: a "sad, slow, distrustful man, with his rigid methods and his mind for microscopic detail" (28).

Nevertheless, for all the delays that his punctiliousness caused, Philip presided over a highly-developed governmental system. In France, there was nothing comparable to it: long years of civil war, the precarious establishment of a new royal house - that of Bourbon - to succeed the old and feeble, the constant need to pander to vested interests of various, and usually conflicting, types had profoundly adverse effects. In England, jobbery, vicious court faction and a queen who daily walked the tight-rope above the turbulent waters of national and international politics weakened the central government. In Spain, however, a network of royal councils interlocked to serve the monarch at his desire, and an archive existed in the castle of Simancas, a few miles from Valladolid, where conciliar documents were stored in safety (29). In one respect, however, the system lacked its proper crown. Philip's natural suspicions had impeded the development of a formal body that could consider the most important matters of state: foreign policy. But the Spanish monarchy was too large and its commitments too numerous to allow even Philip to take every decision unaided. Thus, in the last years of his reign, we see a small, ad hoc group to which the King felt that he could turn for advice. It was characteristic of his reluctance to confide utterly in anyone that he seems to have avoided formality in his relations even with these men. Their consultas, or written memoranda, are very scarce indeed for the period

(27) Motley iii 40.

(28) Hume Philip II 6.

(29) The archive's efficiency, however, could not always be guaranteed. In 1603, when the Council of State wished to consult the text of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, it could not be found. AGS EK1606/12.

between 1595 and 1598, and in their form are more casual than those that were shortly to be presented to Philip III. For this reason, it is more accurate to speak of councillors of state, rather than of a Council. Because they were few, personal and often unannounced access to the King seems to have been normal. It is very hard to tell the extent to which Philip followed their advice: but he was under no obligation to admit them into his solitary life, and there would have been no point in reducing their consultations to a mere formality (30).

Moreover, in so far as Philip felt able to trust in any group, that which surrounded him in his last years must have seemed eminently dependable. Until his departure for the Low Countries as governor in 1595, his favourite nephew, the Archduke Albert of Austria, had been prominent; and his transfer to Flanders at a very difficult time was a token of the esteem in which he was held (31). Of the rest, Don Cristóbal de Moura, Don Juan de Idiáquez and the Count of Chinchón were by far the most important. Moura, a Portuguese noble, was reckoned the most influential of the trio; and although he was especially concerned with the affairs of Portugal and the Indies, his name appeared prominently upon consultas that dealt with foreign policy (32). He also acted as the King's main link with the Treasury, and in the 1590's large numbers of payment orders were signed by him. Yet he was no more than primus inter pares. More unassuming, but wielding great influence, was Idiáquez, sprung from a family of Biscayan hidalgos and as bland and patient as Moura was irascible and impetuous (33). His father had been one of Charles V's secretaries of state until his death at the hands of German Protestant forces in 1547, and several of the Idiáquez were numbered amongst

(30) On this point, as on others, I am in considerable disagreement with Dr. Williams' views as set out in his recent article. As will be clear from my chapter on the Treaty of Vervins (iii infra) the councillors of state were called upon to deal with matters of immense importance; and their consultas are not confined to AGS E2741. cf Williams EHR 753, 754.

(31) qvi p. 43 sqq.

(32) Danvila 719; AGE E965/sf.

(33) Danvila 727; Cabrera Felipe II iii 251.

the royal secretaries at the turn of the century (34). He himself, after some years' experience as ambassador in Genoa, Venice and Paris, had succeeded Antonio Pérez as secretary of state, and was made a councillor of state in 1594. He seems to have written to and confided in no-one - which probably accounts for his success in weathering every political storm from about 1580 until his death in 1614. The third member of the trio, Chinchón, was apparently not on the best of terms with the other two (35). He had been with Philip longest and had assisted at the two great occasions of the reign - the signing of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559 and Philip's proclamation as King of Portugal in 1580; he seems to have been on intimate terms with the King throughout (36). He had served as ambassador in Rome and at the imperial court; he was a member of the Councils of State, War, Aragon and Italy; and was the King's mayordomo mayor (37). A letter of the Count of Portalegre gives the impression that Chinchón was a disagreeably greedy man: but as a friend of Moura, Portalegre was perhaps biased (38). There were others who bore the title of councillor of state, but who were far less influential in the conduct of policy. The Marquess of Velada, tutor of the future Philip III, occupied himself with his charge; Juan Andrea Doria, the admiral of the Mediterranean galleys, lived in Genoa and only wrote an opinion when specifically asked to do so; Pedro López de Ayala, Count of Fuensalida and comendador mayor de Castilla, was the "mayordomo el más antiguo del rey" and his name appears only once on a consulta during our period (39). The eighteenth-century antiquarian, Garma, noted the names of the Count of Miranda, the Marquess of Mirabel and the Cardinal de Castro as having been appointed councillors of state in 1596, but I have seen no evidence to corroborate this (40). The

(34) Pérez Mínguez 69.

(35) Hinojosa i 378.

(36) Cabrera Felipe II i 241, ii 633, et passim.

(37) Alcocer i 381. For the great importance of the last office, V. Pfandl 154.

(38) CODOIN xliii 553.

(39) Cabrera Felipe II iv 263.

(40) Garma iv 66.

remaining councillor, the Count of Olivares, was absent as Viceroy of Sicily and, later, Naples. With three councillors, Philip was satisfied: they were men of considerable experience and varied talents, and a policy recommended by them would be well-reasoned and with a due regard for practicalities, but thoroughly imbued with a high sense of Spain's calling and of their duties as Spaniards.

The death of Philip II in El Escorial on 13th September, 1598, brought about a number of important changes in the conduct of affairs of state. The new king, Philip III, had always been a dutiful son - "the obedient Isaac, the loving Joseph," remarked Cabrera (41). His personal piety had been, and was always to be, considerable and he saw himself unmistakeably as the wielder of the sword of the faith (42). He was affable, "it not being known that he ever interrupted anyone, how much soever the speaker might abuse his benignity and patience," (43) but tended to be uncommunicative. His passion for hunting, however, contrasted strongly with his father's disinterest. And above all, unlike his father, he chose to be the first gentleman, rather than the chief clerk, of his kingdom. He has often been criticized for his apparent belief that kingship should have as one of its main elements an easy generosity, and the grants that he made to his favourite and the sums that he spent on royal progresses, masques and court entertainments are normally regarded as having been an irresponsible drain upon the Treasury. But he had much lee-way to make up. Philip II, by the standards of the time, had defaulted upon his obligations towards court and nobility and had shrunk from personal contact with his subjects. The writer Alamos de Barrientos was clear about what course the new king should adopt, and his advice was a tacit criticism of Philip II's practice:

"before all else, Your Majesty should visit all his kingdoms, beginning with Aragon and ending up with Portugal, and give as much

(41) Cabrera Felipe II iv 200.

(42) Seco 80-81; qvi pp 110, 125, 142.

(43) Bentivoglio 370.



to be understood so as to raise expectations. Visits are recognized as being most necessary for new monarchs, for by this means the people's loyalty is confirmed ... Modesty, a good physique and personal attractiveness are proper attributes for a prince and make him liked by the people. Personal contact, and the exposition of grievances and their remedy will gain the people's affection; they will know that they have the King they need and will feel impelled to serve and help him. Although the unseen is more feared, it is not more loved..."

(Ante todas cosas VM debe visitar todos sus reinos comenzando de los de Aragón y parando en el de Portugal y dando luego muestra de lo que ha de hacer así para que se entretengan con la esperanza; con la visita (muy necesaria y confesada por tal en los príncipes nuevos) confirmará los ánimos de sus pueblos ...; que la modestia, el buen talle y la hermosura son partes muy dignas de un príncipe y con que se hace amable al pueblo y con verle y tratarle decirle sus agravios y recibir el remedio de ellos granjeará su afición y sabrán que tienen rey y el rey que han menester, moveralos con la vista a servirle y socorrerle; que aunque se teme mas lo que no se ve no se ama tanto ... (44) )

Philip III was therefore perhaps truer to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century ideal of monarchy. Surrounded by the same aura of majesty as his father, he wished to shew himself to his subjects. Long and costly progresses therefore became common; the court was moved to Valladolid, in the heart of Old Castile; the King was often to be seen in court ceremonies or, like any gentleman, hunting in the chase. He felt himself more a man of action than his father, and on more than one occasion in the early years of his reign offered to lead his armies in person against the enemy (45).

From these beginnings has sprung a legend that Philip III played little part in the conduct of affairs of state: "scarcely a hairdresser or lemonade-dealer in all Spain was less cognizant of the political affairs of the kingdom than was its monarch." (46) "Casual, lazy and

(44) BN 904/315 Verso.

(45) qvi p. 106<sup>eq</sup>. It is interesting to see the importance given to hunting as a kingly exercise by Saavedra, empresa iv.

(46) Motley IV 128.

diffident," is the most recent judgement (47). The evidence of the state papers shews otherwise. In 1605, the Venetian Contarini noted that the King habitually spent three or four hours in the middle of the day attending to important business, and indeed the comments that the latter wrote in the margin of the consultas presented to him prove conclusively that he was entirely au fait with the issues that arose, sometimes more so than his councillors (48). He kept his Council busy with ambassadorial despatches - which he had generally seen first - and their opinions reached him no matter where he was: the replies that he decided to send often bear the name of one of his hunting-lodges. He may indeed have seemed to work less than his father: but the latter had always preferred to deal with unprocessed material. Philip III returned to the more flexible practice of Charles V, who had been too active to deal with any more than the most essential business: though his desire to emulate his grandfather's military exploits was to remain unfulfilled.

Despite his streak of self-assertiveness, Philip III seems to have needed a good deal of moral support. His sincere and enduring friendship with Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, Marquess of Denia and soon Duke of Lerma, stands as proof of this. Despite his dying father's obvious dislike of Lerma and his charge that his son retain the old and trusted advisers of the last years of the reign, Philip III had other plans (49). There is a story in the Adiciones to Malvezzi's History of Philip III that, even as Philip II lay on his death-bed, his son ordered Moura to surrender the keys of the document-cabinet to Lerma (50). True or not, the episode has been taken as symbolizing the first and decisive defeat of Moura and the old-guard, a defeat that was to be followed by Moura's virtual banishment to Portugal as Viceroy and the concentration of all power into Lerma's hands.

(47) Williams EHR 751.

(48) Cabrera Felipe III 576; qvi passim.

(49) González Dávila 26.

(50) Yáñez 141.

Such a view cannot be sustained for long. In the first place, Moura's position was nothing like that which Lerma was soon to attain; as we have seen, the former was one of a group, and merely to supplant him would not bring a man to power. Idiáquez was still prominent; and Velada, the new king's tutor, surely posed the greatest threat of all, the more so since his pupil thought highly of him. In the second place, Moura was perhaps not the type who would appeal to the young Philip. Aged sixty - some fifteen years older than Lerma - he was reputed to be brusque, even rude, and ill-able to conceal annoyance or ambition. Above all, it had been Lerma, and not Moura, who had courted Philip's friendship when the latter had been an exuberant stripling and had augmented his protégé's small income out of his own pocket (51).

In fact, contemporary accounts of the first weeks of Philip III's reign give the distinct impression that Moura and the rest of his colleagues were still near the centre of power. Admittedly, Philip ordered that none of his father's old advisers should be admitted to his chambers unannounced after Chinchón, forgetting that times had changed, had simply walked in one day. But both Moura and Idiáquez were, like Lerma, given accommodation in the palace at El Escorial when the King moved there from the nearby village; and Moura, with Velada and Lerma, accompanied the King on his daily visits to the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia (52). Nor do Moura's letters shew him to be unduly depressed. On 22nd September, just over a week after Philip II's death, he told his friend, the Count of Portalegre, that he was beginning a new life at sixty:

"we find ourselves with a new king who works wonders and does us more favour than we all deserve, but no-one is happy with his deserts unless he obtains what he desires: the man who is tired and wants little will be free of this burden. I really could not go on

(51) Pérez Bustamante 39.

(52) AHN E Colección Vega tomo 9/37.

shouldering the burden that I was carrying, and the least relief will be welcome: more one cannot say to one who is so far away. Your Lordship commend us to God and be assured that we have a very good King."

(quedamos con el nuevo rey que hace maravillas y más merced que merecemos todos mas nadie se contenta con lo que merece si no llega a lo que desea; de ese trabajo se librará quien se hallare cansado y deseare poco ... realmente no podía ya con lo que llevaba auestas y así cualquier alivio por pequeño que sea será bien recibido y no se puede más a quien está tan lejos; VS nos encomiende a Dios y tenga por cierto que tenemos muy buen rey. (53) )

In the documents of the Council of State there are several traces of Moura's continued activity. We find him, for instance, with Idiáquez in Lerma's chambers in November, 1598, discussing letters from Seville and Cadiz, at a time when Lerma's star was recognized to be in the ascendant and when also a whole flood of new councillors had been appointed (54). There are few consultas extant from the first fifteen months of the reign, but Moura clearly was present at the most important meetings of the Council of State, and I have noted that only Idiáquez attended more sessions than he. Perhaps the serious liver trouble, to which Cabrera refers, restricted his movements, as it seems to have confined him to Madrid during the royal progress to Valencia in 1599; he was, after all, quite an old man (55). His appointment as Viceroy of Portugal, though it had been rumoured as early as October, 1598, came some eighteen months after the death of his old master (56). In short, he did not suffer badly at the hands of the new king and his favourite: he kept up with important political business, and he was given one of the most important charges of the Spanish empire - much to the annoyance of the Portuguese, who had expected someone of royal blood (57). Undoubtedly, Lerma cannot have been devoid of fear of Moura: a melancholy and somewhat depressive man, he must have been apprehensive of all possible rivals. But there is no prima facie evidence that he was as full of enmity as later

(53) BN 981/110.

(54) Seco 84; AGS E2636/40.

(55) Cabrera Felipe III 5, 13.

(56) Danvila 778-9.

(57) Cabrera Felipe III 71.

authors have suggested and that he felt impelled to remove Moura in order to establish his position.

A further misconception must be removed: Lerma was no enemy of the Council of State. There was no point in repeating the mistake of the previous reign and overwhelming King and favourite in an enormous and suffocating mass of paper. As the anonymous Advertencias al Duque de Lerma cuando en la privanza con el señor rey Don Felipe III pointed out, the Council has its uses:

"In the last government three means of consultation were used: by the first, the presidents of the councils made verbal reports on all matters and His Majesty gave them verbal decisions; by the second, the secretaries consulted His Majesty verbally, telling him what had been decided in the councils, and His Majesty gave them verbal decisions; by the last, the councils make signed and written reports about everything, and the secretaries take them to and fro, returning with the replies. This last I take to be the best for obtaining a right and balanced view of affairs, and I advise Your Lordship to ensure that His Royal Highness demand to receive the consultas personally, that you talk them over with him, that the appropriate secretary draft the decrees, and that the councils be extremely prudent and secretive about their consultas."

(En el gobierno pasado se han usado tres maneras de consultar: la primera que los presidentes consultaban a boca todas las cosas y a boca las resolvía SM con ellos; la segunda que los secretarios consultaban con SM a boca, haciendo relación del acuerdo que se tomaba en los consejos y SM se resolvía con ellos a boca; la última ha sido consultar los consejos todas las cosas por papel con su firma, enviando los secretarios las consultas y a ellos volvían las respuestas ... La última manera tengo por más justificada para la verdad y para tomar buen acuerdo en ellas y que VS [exija?] de SA que todas las consultas lleguen a sus manos y que VS las resuelva a boca con SA y que asiente los decretos el secretario que para ello se señalare y que en el consejo de estas consultas haya grandísimo recato y secreto (58). )

This was but one of many signs that the popularity of Philip II's mode of rule was wearing thin. The Venetian ambassador reported that, only a fortnight after Philip's death, the Adelantado of Castile was complaining that, in the past, Spain had been "subject to a single brain that thought it knew all that could be known and treated everyone else as a blockhead" (59). The same sentiment, though less forthrightly expressed, is obvious in the Consideraciones para que comenzase a reinar con felicidad Felipe III (60). Having eulogized the late king, the writer bewailed, not only declining national prestige and a lack of money, but also the absence of "grandes cabezas de estado".

"Your Majesty must order that there be a standing Council of State, and must put on it those who best understand its nature and purpose; they should have considerable practical experience and the other qualities that should be necessary to merit so great a position, rather than that they should be mere recipients of an honour; the office of councillor is proper to great captains and generals who have grown old in conquering enemies and winning great victories, to ambassadors and viceroys who have exercised their charges in exemplary fashion and with due approbation."

(Ha de ser VM servido de mandar que le haya ordinariamente y de poner en el las personas que mejor lo entendieren con larga experiencia y ejercicio y con las otras partes con que se ha de merecer y alcanzar tan gran lugar más que por hacer merced y honrar a las personas, oficio que es propio de grandes capitanes, generales, envejecidos en vencer enemigos y alcanzar grandes victorias, embajadores y virreyes que hayan gobernado con gran ejemplo y aprobación)

He went on to point out the dangers of governing by means of "avisos y relaciones secretos" and stressed that, if Philip II's practices were continued, the dangers would increase.

"Your Majesty must be assured that there is no opinion in the world so certain as that of a good council, and that those who take away

(59) CSPV ix 744.

(60) BN 2346/23: internal evidence shews it to have been contemporary.

the management of affairs from such men do not do so for the sake of God's service and Your Majesty's and the common weal, but principally for their private ends or for sheer ambition, and so as to appear the only ones who are trusted. We have seen an infinity of things go astray by this means, and not one on account of an opinion of the council: for although in a council there may be someone who has his own ends in view, God is merciful and so gives His aid that where one errs the others rectify, so that as a whole they never err - as the Holy Ghost foretold where He proclaims that 'in the multitude of counsellors there is safety'."

(Persuádese VM que no hay tan seguro parecer en el mundo como es de un buen consejo y que los que sacan los negocios de los que son tales no lo hacen por lo que conviene al servicio de Dios y de VM y bien universal sino principalmente por sus fines particulares o por pura ambición y que parezca que se confía de ellos solos. Hanse visto erradas infinitas cosas y negocios gobernados por este camino y ninguno por parecer del consejo donde aunque hubiese alguno que tuviese fin particular favorece Dios y asistirle tanto a los consejos que lo que unos yerran lo enderezan otros de manera que nunca se yerra como lo tiene previsto el Espíritu Santo que dice que está la salud en los muchos consejos.)

Philip III seems to have taken this advice to heart. Within a fortnight of his accession, he had appointed to the Council of State Lerma, the Count of Miranda, Rodrigo Vázquez de Arce (President of the Council of Castile), the Dukes of Nájera and Medina Sidonia, the Count of Fuentes, the Adelantado Mayor of Castile (Martín de Padilla y Manrique, Count of Buendía and Santa Gadea) and Don Juan de Borja (soon to be created Count of Ficallo) (61). Others were added gradually: The Count of Alba de Liste makes his first appearance in a document of September, 1599; the Cardinal Guevara and the Archbishop of Toledo (Bernardo de Sandoval y Rojas, Lerma's uncle) in November of the same year; the Duke of Infantado in March, 1600; Fray Gaspar de Córdoba, the royal confessor, in September, 1600; the Constable of Castile in May, 1601; the Marquess of Poza in February, 1602; the Count

(61) Actas de las Cortes xv 674, 680; AHN E Colección Vega tomo 9/37.

of Olivares in October, 1602; and the Duke of Sesa in May, 1604 (62). The appointments shew that Philip wished to draw from all sections of public life - administration, diplomacy, the army and navy, the Court, the Church. Not all were Castilians: Idiáquez was Basque and Borja and Sesa were Catalans. As far as scant personal data allow us to see, they were all roughly of the same generation - men in their fifties and above - and of the same class: only the confessor was not of noble birth. They did not all have the same influence and importance, however, and by no means all the members were present at any given session of the Council. The most regular attenders were Idiáquez, Miranda and Chinchón; Alba de Liste, Ficallo, the Constable, Córdoba and, from 1602, Poza came next; the rest trailed far behind. The pattern of their attendances is difficult to explain. Idiáquez, for instance, did not appear in the Council between mid-April, 1602, and mid-November of the same year, nor from early April to early July, 1603, nor from mid-November of the same year until March, 1604. The last two periods of absence could hardly have been for holidays: the negotiations with England were in full swing and Idiáquez, as the most experienced member of the Council, could hardly have wished to avoid taking part. Perhaps a comparatively healthy age forgets the seriousness of the ailments of former generations.

Nor were the most regular members always the most influential. Chinchón's opinions were often too extreme to be practicable, and Córdoba, though a less frequent attender, wielded more influence than he (63). The majority of the Council usually did little more than lend weight to the

(62) Garma iv cap. v also lists García de Loaysa y Girón (Archbishop of Toledo until his death on 20th February, 1599) and Pedro Portocarrero (Inquisitor-General and Bishop of Calahorra, Córdoba and Cuenca until his death on 20th September of the same year) but I have found no trace of their activities as councillors.

(63) I am almost entirely certain that Córdoba did not use his position as confessor to exert a great and secret influence upon the King's decisions. His opinions in the Council were always frank, and occasionally at variance with the policy adopted. He was, moreover, not always with the King.



opinions expressed by the two leaders: Idiáquez and Miranda. Idiáquez, the intelligent and experienced civil servant who preferred to be a power behind the throne and the "Great Commoner" of his generation - he had no noble title - was the great friend and ally of his colleague. Miranda had been Governor of Catalonia and Viceroy of Naples, and in the new reign held the presidency both of the Council of Castile and the Council of Italy. He had the reputation of being an honest and reasonable man, not eloquent but capable and well-liked. In his younger days, he had apparently fought with Don John of Austria in Italy (64) which perhaps accounted for his lameness, but by our period he had become more reflective (65). Although the two did not always agree in details, by and large their advice to the King was similar - experienced, with a due regard to practicalities and, equally important, to Spain's sense of mission; it was, moreover, advice that was nearly always followed by the King and his favourite.

The Council seems to have worked in quite an efficient way. Their joint activities for the first fifteen months are largely unrecorded: probably the royal progress of 1599 caused too much turmoil, and it is very likely that the texts of at least some of the consultas were lost or mislaid in the flurry of journeying and wedding-festivities (66). It was in about February, 1600, that the Council settled down to the regular pattern that was to be characteristic of the next few years, with sessions held in the capital, whether Madrid or, from January of 1601, Valladolid. The Council met once or twice a week and, in the normal course of events, probably for two or three hours at a time. The King very rarely attended. The Council's main business was the discussion of the despatches that arrived from abroad which, having first been sent to the King, were then passed on through Lerma

(64) Williams Ph.D. 416

(65) Contarini, printed as an appendix to Cabrera Felipe III.

(66) I think Dr. Williams incautious in assuming that the extant consultas of this period are the only ones that were made. EHR 759.

to a secretary of state - usually Andrés de Prada or Pedro de Franqueza - who read them to the Council. The debate would then ensue. The secretary took notes of each councillor's opinion (these were expressed in order of seniority on the Council, the longest-serving member speaking first), made a draft and, if the meeting had been particularly important or contentious, would receive the councillors' personal drafts of their speeches. A fair copy was then made and the text presented to the next session of the Council. Those who had been present at the previous meeting - and sometimes those who had not - signed their initial (rubrica) at the end of the consulta, which was then presented to the King. In due course, the consulta was returned to the Council with the King's rider written in the margin, and one of the councillors would often supervise the drafting of the appropriate despatch, putting his initial at the foot. The King then signed the fair copy. There are considerable difficulties in knowing how long this process took. The King's riders bear no date, and despatches are not always available. It should be said, however, that with one exception, there were no complaints about the dilatoriness of either Philip or the Council during our period. Ambassadors seem to have been quite content with the pace of affairs and urgent business was dealt with as quickly as possible. Only the matter of the English succession saw long delays, and this was the result of a deliberate policy (67). The King's frequent absences from his Court do not appear to have made much difference. The Council continued to meet in the capital, and letters were frequently drafted in the royal hunting-lodges: Philip even when on holiday still kept abreast of affairs. The much-criticized delays of the period were the result of the inefficiency of the Treasury, not of the Council of State.

But Philip did not always find it convenient to refer matters to the Council. He was, after all, under no obligation to do so; as Idiáquez once

(67) qvi p. 161 seqq.

pointed out, the Council was entirely dependent upon the King:

"although that body is of such authority and confidence, there are matters that are best not submitted to the judgement of many; and the judgement of kings is so above all others that their subjects cannot call it into question, and they themselves are not bound to tell everything to their councillors; for the latter's original function was to advise the King in his doubts: when he has none, neither reason nor custom make him wait upon his Council."

(Si bien aquel tribunal es de tanta autoridad y confianza hay materias que es bien no ponerlas al juicio de muchos; y el de los reyes es tan soberano que no pueden residenciarles los vasallos ni forzoso que lo comunique todo a los consejeros cuya institución fue consultar en las dudas del príncipe pero cuando no las tiene en las cosas que ocurren por razón ni por costumbre no depende del consejo. (68) )

Moreover, its discretion was sometimes in doubt. In 1603, Philip wrote with his own hand the Orden de SM sobre el secreto que se debe guardar en el consejo, which complained that ministers were too careless with state secrets (69). The King was therefore thrown back on to his favourite. It would be wrong to take too literally the opinion of the Venetian ambassador that "the whole machine" was "managed" by Lerma (70). Admittedly, Lerma had great influence with his young protégé. The new Archbishop of Toledo, Sandoval, went so far as to criticize his nephew for encouraging the King to roam about the countryside on hunting-expeditions, far away from the press of potential royal servants and for controlling with great rigour admission to the royal presence (71). Some have gone so far as to see the move of the Court from Madrid to Valladolid early in 1601 as an attempt upon Lerma's part to prevent regular contact between Philip and his aunt, the dowager-empress Maria (72). Certainty on this point is not easily to

- (68) Pérez Mínguez, Appendix. For this reason, I think Dr. Williams mistaken when he writes of the "jurisdictional scope" of the Council as being small. The Council had no jurisdictional scope, in the normal sense, because by its nature and function it needed none. EHR 754.
- (69) AHN E193/2.
- (70) CSPV ix 999.
- (71) BN 4013/101; BN 1492/32.
- (72) Pérez Bustamante 74.

be found, by the very nature of the case. But the move to Valladolid was by no means a sudden decision, rumours to the effect having been current for a good twelve months previously, and the order was not immediately rescinded on the Empress' death in 1603 (73). Moreover, Valladolid was no bad choice. In the heart of the old kingdom of Castile and León, its climate was, and is, perhaps less extreme than that of Madrid: even one of the reluctant courtiers, resentful of being uprooted from his familiar haunts, had to acknowledge that matters could have been worse (74). Undoubtedly, however, Lerma's only means of keeping in pristine repair his intimacy with the King was to maintain a continuity of contact that none could hope to rival. It is a token of the strength of his position that he was able to do so with unqualified success throughout the early years of the reign.

The legend that Lerma was as indolent and uninformed as his young master is similarly untenable. He rarely attended the Council of State, but when he spoke it was with authority and influence (75). Like Moura before him, he frequently sent orders to the Treasury. He often gave audiences to foreign ambassadors - a task that required great tact and perception - and sometimes received letters from abroad - Henry IV of France and the Archduke in Flanders were amongst his correspondents (76). With the Infanta Isabella especially he was on the best of terms and a voluminous correspondence between them bears all the signs of a warm friendship. In all, he spent a good deal of time at affairs of state, and on one occasion was reproved by Isabella for over-working (77). One thing is certain: he was no pacifist. His expressed opinions in the

(73) Cabrera Felipe III.

(74) BN 1492/97.

(75) qvi pp. 106, 194. I am forced once more to disagree with Dr. Williams. EHR 752.

(76) AGS EK1460/7; BRAH xlvii, xlviii, xlix; AGR SEG 300.

(77) BRAH xlvii. 334.

Council shew him to have been bellicose on more than one occasion (78). And, just as he fostered Philip's love of magnificence, court life and hunting, so he must have paid due regard to his patron's desire to emulate the warlike exploits of his ancestors. It is inconceivable that a Castilian noble like Lerma, exposed to the same cultural influences as the King, would have wished to eradicate this trait.

Clear proof of both his interest in and influence upon state affairs is to be found in his relations with the junta de tres. This body had an illustrious membership: Idiáquez, Miranda, Córdoba and, occasionally, Velada (79). It has recently been suggested that it was in some way dependent upon the Council of State - a committee rather than a cabal (80). In fact, the junta received its orders from the King by way of the favourite. Important matters were discussed: the Biron affair, a league against the Turk, the possibility of peace with the United Provinces, the report of an entente between England and France, the re-incorporation of the Low Countries into the Spanish crown. There are unmistakeable signs that the outer ring of councillors, who with the members of the junta made up the Council of State, had no detailed knowledge of what their more favoured colleagues debated. Nor is it right to see the junta as derogating from Lerma's position, for he manifestly kept a close eye upon proceedings. Many of the consultas that they produced were written out by Lerma's creature, Franqueza, and sent directly to the favourite; sometimes, indeed, Franqueza seems to have regarded himself as a member of the junta (though he was never a councillor of state), for his initial appears at the foot with the others (81). Nor must we assume that Philip and Lerma were incapable of taking

(78) qvi pp 38, 46. An interesting portrait of Lerma, made by Rubens in 1603, depicts the Duke half-armoured and mounted, with a background of armies. Museo del Prado, Madrid, no. 3137.

(79) I am surprised that Dr. Williams should regard a body made up of the two most experienced royal administrators, the royal confessor and the King's old tutor as being "grotesquely-composed". EHR 762, 766.

(80) Williams Ph.D. 333; cf Lynch Spain under the Habsburgs ii 20-21.

(81) For a brief account of Franqueza's career, see Juderías.

any decision unaided: Villamediana in 1603 was sent to England with detailed instructions that had been drawn up by the King and the favourite without reference to any member of the Council. Our conclusion surely must be that Philip III profited by the mistake of his father, and never stood in danger of losing sight of the wood because of the tangle of administrative trees.

But many miles had to be travelled and several weeks to pass before the orders that came from the King and his advisers could be acted upon; and even when at their destination, they passed into the hands of a third party, who might conceivably interpret the King's wishes to suit his own convenience or the exigencies of the situation in which he found himself. In fact, throughout our period, Spain was obediently served by those whom she had "sent to lie abroad". Not all were of the highest quality. Juan Bautista de Tasis, who held the Paris embassy from 1599 until his retirement in 1603, sent the most turgid and unrewarding despatches of the period and provided more advice than information; he seemed unable to stand up to Henry IV, a defect frequently noted during the Saluzzo crisis, and had little standing and few contacts at the French Court - although, towards the end of his term of office even he more than made up for his former prolixity by providing secret information gained from a friend in high places (82). But he had from the first been an interim appointee and, though conscientious, was elderly; and he remained at his post for so long only because of a series of unavoidable delays in finding him a successor. Other ministers were more highly thought of. The Duke of Sesa in Rome - "el centro donde cae todo" - discharged his mission at a most difficult period to the constant approbation of the Council and received the reward of a seat on that body. Don Baltasar de Zúñiga, the bright young man of the diplomatic service, after a signally-successful term at the Brussels embassy, was sent to Paris. Don Guillén de San Clemente

continued to watch over Spanish interests at the Court of the Holy Roman Emperor with consummate skill as he had done since 1592. These three ambassadors merited, and received, nothing but praise.

There is, furthermore, no record of an ambassador's having exceeded his instructions. The decision of the Count of Fuentes, Captain-General and Governor of Milan, to open relations with the dissident Duke of Biron might perhaps be cited as an exception, for he seems to have had no prior order from the King to take so important a step (83). Yet his belief that he was justified in grasping a golden opportunity as soon as possible was understood and approved of by Philip and his closest advisers (84). A minister abroad was expected to interpret his orders imaginatively and wisely: provided he left strategy to his government, he had considerable liberty in formulating his own tactics. In our period, the arrangement worked well. The other means by which an ambassador could influence policy was by sending wrong or biased information to his master (85). It is easy to attach too much importance to this obvious fact. When an ambassador was worth his salt, his reports were accurate and the fruit of his personal observation and knowledge. Spies were not approved of and confidants distrusted, and their information rarely accorded much importance either by the ambassador or by the government; this is especially obvious in Spain's consistent reserve when dealing with the numerous English recusants whose petitions for help came in a constant stream (86). Any intellectual or ideological limitations were those of a noble Spaniard of the epoch, and were shared with the members of the government. Even when his judgement was perhaps not particularly acute - as with Juan Bautista de Tasis and with Villamediana - the fact was obvious to the Council of State: both the failings of the one and the inexperience of the other were fully recognized.

(83) qvi p. 121 seqq.

(84) qvi p. 122.

(85) cf the great emphasis laid upon the quality of information by Professor C. H. Carter in The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs, passim.

(86) qvi pp. 140, 158.

When Tasis' continued and erroneous report that Henry IV would not go to war over Saluzzo was disbelieved, and Villamediana's continued and erroneous opinion that James I genuinely wished to concede more than proved to be the case was steadfastly believed, we must conclude that, in both instances, it was because the King and Council wished it to be so. It was here that the process of decision-making, for all its good points, fell down.

(iii) Royal Finance.

Spain's immense commitments were reflected in her expenses. At the end of Philip II's reign, the latter were reckoned at about 11,000,000 ducats a year, of which no less than 3,000,000 were devoted to the war in Flanders (87). Her resources, however, were not as great as her neighbours believed. Admittedly, Spain had the advantage over other countries: James I of England was said to dispose of 1,130,000 escudos a year, and Henry IV of France of 9,258,368 escudos (88). According to Cornwallis, the first resident English ambassador in Spain after the end of the war in 1604, Philip III's annual income was some 14,000,000 ducats a year. But he at once pointed out the major problem of the Spanish monarchy: a large proportion of these millions never reached the King (89). Although his general calculation was inexact, Cornwallis had reached the heart of the matter. The Spanish financial system was a hopelessly-intricate maze, as well for officials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as for modern scholars. Concise balance-sheets are few, and must be used with caution. Nevertheless, certain broad trends are fairly clear. During our period, the official annual income of the King of Spain was between ten and twelve-and-a-half million ducats (90).

(87) Parker Spanish Road Appendix K; CJH 358/sf document of November (?), 1596; CJH 380/sf document of 21st October, 1598. In fact, more than this sum was usually sent to Flanders; in 1600 alone, 4,581,295 ducats were remitted: AGS E626/43; CODOIN xxxvi 509-544.

(88) AGS E840/189; AGS EK1604/27; AGS EK1603/43,44. An escudo in our period was of roughly the same value as the ducat, the former being worth 400 maravedis and the latter 375.

(89) Cornwallis 306.

(90) AGS E616/197,198; AGS CJH408/sf, document of 1601.



The traditional source of royal wealth, and that which ought to have been by far the most fruitful, the crown lands, was virtually useless. During the sixteenth century, the Habsburgs had alienated their revenues by granting juros to their subjects in return for a lump sum. The short-term rewards of the policy were obvious: without precisely alienating their lands, the Habsburgs could realize the capital that they represented. The "rich men of the middle sort and the merchants who profited by the needs and enterprises of the kings and their armies" (91) were assured of an annual income in return for their original down-payment. Over a longer period, however, the results were disastrous. In 1556, some 68% of the lands were devoted to paying the interest upon juros; and by the death of Philip II, the proportion had risen alarmingly to 96.5% (92).

The King was therefore forced to depend upon various sorts of extraordinary revenue. The Pope habitually allowed the crown to collect and spend three clerical subsidies, the subsidio, excusado and cruzada, which brought in between 1,200,000 ducats and 1,400,000 ducats (93). The annual flow of treasure from the New World "like new fleets of Solomon or of Ophir" (94) provided between 2,500,000 ducats and 3,000,000 ducats (95). The Cortes of Castile were occasionally urged to help the King out. In December, 1598, the President of the Council of Castile, Vázquez de Arce, told the procuradores that when Philip II died, the royal patrimony had died with him. His successor, the Count of Miranda, painted a similar picture twelve months later:

"His Majesty has succeeded to his father's commitment to go to the defence of the Catholic Church and to maintain these kingdoms in peace and justice - and this without the great amounts of money that

(91) BN 18716/4

(92) Castillo Hispania 52.

(93) AGS CJH 358/sf, document of November (?), 1596; AGS E616/197,198.

(94) López Madera 74.

(95) as (93).

are needed to maintain the royal estate and dignity and the many things that depend upon the King : so much so that one may truthfully say that he has only the name of king without the resources with which to discharge the obligations and commitments that go with it, for everything is pledged to the hilt."

(SM ha sucedido en las mismas obligaciones de acudir a la defensa de la iglesia católica y sustentar estos reinos en paz y justicia y sin tener hacienda ninguna siendo menester tanta para sustentar el estado y dignidad real y tantas cosas como de SM penden que con verdad se puede decir que sólo ha sido el nombre de rey con las cargas y obligaciones de tal y sin tener con que cumplirlas por estar todo enajenado. (96) )

These emotive appeals were not gladly received. As early as 1593, the Cortes had urged Philip II to reduce his expenditure and had shewn little sympathy towards his imperial dream (97). Nevertheless, their subsidies provided the crown with 400,000 ducats a year during our period (98). Other expedients were less happy. Between 1599 and 1606, vellón coinage to the value of 22 million ducats was minted (99). In April, 1601, attempts were made to compile an inventory of all privately-owned silver plate with a view to taxation: but the reaction of Philip's subjects, both clerical and lay, was so markedly hostile that the idea was quickly abandoned (100). Other parts of the Spanish empire had their own financial problems. Although Sicily had an annual income of 362,298 escudos and Milan that of between 2,874,716 ducats and 3,313,185 ducats, debts there too were heavy. Both these possessions bore the brunt of the pensions that the Spanish monarchy granted to its faithful servants and retainers - soldiers, courtiers and administrators - but had begun to stagger under the burden. In 1600, Naples had an annual deficit of about 550,000 ducats and an accumulated debt of 2,754,034 ducats, and Sicily's accumulated debt had reached 1,836,153 ducats by 1602 (101). The main expedient, that of the asiento - a

(96) Actas de las Cortes xviii 425.

(97) Sánchez Albornoz ii 528.

(98) AGE E616/197, 198.

(99) Vicens Vives Historia Económica 406.

(100) Cabrera Felipe III 100, 110; BN 1492/36; BN 4013/317.

(101) AGS E1160/152; AGS E1875/193; AGS E1099/55, 56.

loan contracted with a merchant, usually a foreigner - was the most ruinous of all; the crown was forced to pay inflated rates of interest for the service that was provided (102).

In 1596, Philip II had tried to cut the Gordian knot by suspending payment to the asentistas and converting the asientos into juros, which bound him to pay a far lower rate of interest (103). By this time, the royal debt had reached astronomical proportions. It was expected that, by the end of 1599, it would be some 25,858,275 ducats; and on Philip III's accession, the annual debt from 1601 was forecasted as being a probable 1,612,435 ducats (104). A document in the Biblioteca Nacional records a remarkable conversation between Philip, at the time still Prince of Asturias, and an official of the Treasury (105). The latter set out the manifold difficulties that the Spanish monarchy faced; and to the Prince's question,

"Is there some sizeable sum which would make possible conquests, expeditions, defence against our enemies or the redemption of royal rents - which, as far as I can see will be the mightiest project that could be undertaken?"

he was forced to give a brutal reply:

"There is absolutely no money. Even if there were, be it never so certain, it would not suffice for the preservation of these kingdoms, for the interest that has to be paid is an eating canker that increases the damage that we sustain when faced with the needs and circumstances that present themselves."

(¿Hay alguna suma junta de cantidad con que se puedan emprender conquistas y jornadas y resistir enemigos o para tratar del desempeño de las rentas reales que según veo será la mayor empresa que se puede intentar?)

No hay tesoro punto ni esa hacienda aunque fuera firme y fija basta para la conservación de los reinos por la polilla de los réditos que acrecientan el daño en las necesidades y ocasiones que se ofrecen.)

- (102) Castillo ESC 752; AGS CJH 358/sf, document of November (?), 1596.  
(103) ibid.  
(104) AGS CJH 358/sf, document of November (?), 1596; AGS CJH 380/sf, document of 21st October, 1598.  
(105) BN 18716/4.

Perhaps the most significant single fact in our period is that Philip chose to disregard the obvious import of the fiscal's discourse. As the heir to a great empire and an exalted tradition, he preferred to keep face before the world; and, in the main, his advisers tended to agree with him. As I shall attempt to shew in the pages that follow, the most prudent course - the immediate and drastic reduction of commitments abroad - was not at once adopted. Spanish foreign policy in the years under examination was the gradual realization that pecunia nervus belli was as true for the Habsburg monarchy as for any other.

(iv) The Fight against Islam.

The bitter truth that ideals were one thing and practicalities another was most noticeable in Spain's attitude towards the Turk. It was all very well to speak of a divine mission whilst the enemy was still within the very gates: but as the empire grew, priorities had to be adjusted. The idea of a Crusade for the recapture of Constantinople and the deliverance of Jerusalem was by no means dead in our period; as we shall see, Clement VIII on more than one occasion hoped to organize a league to this end. The Spanish authorities, however, shewed scant interest. Quite apart from a lively suspicion of those who would be their main allies - France and Venice - the Islamic problem was perhaps more complex for them than for their neighbours. In the first place, even after 1492, large numbers of moriscos - to the old Christians little better than Moors - had remained in the Peninsula. The two wars of the Alpujarras seemed to justify the Christians' worst fears: the moriscos would never be fully integrated into the wider community. Unfortunately, their economic position was powerful. The government knew that in Granada they occupied key roles - shopkeepers, bakers, butchers, inn-keepers, water-carriers (106); in Valencia they were cheek by jowl with the fourteen or fifteen thousand Frenchmen who also lived there; in Aragon,

(106) Actas de las Cortes xv 631.

they could be expected to rise in support of any French army that might cross the Pyrenees (107). Some were known to be in contact with the Berbers and even with the Sultan (108). The sanguine hope of the Catholic Kings had been that missionary work would be sufficient to wean the moriscos away from their former religious habits, but it was not to be fulfilled. Prejudice, tactlessness and oppression ensured that the moriscos' Christianity remained as obdurately superficial as ever. The problem seemed to have only one solution, that which was proposed by the Adelantado of Castile in February, 1602: enslave or slaughter the entire morisco population. The former proposal was too difficult and dangerous, the latter too bloody; and although the Council of State had criticized Charles V and Philip II for allowing affairs to reach so bad a state, they were unable to decide upon a satisfactory course of action (109). In Spain at least, the problem of Islam had to remain untackled and unsolved.

Abroad too, zeal was to be tempered with realism. The Turkish threat was viewed in strategic, rather than religious, terms. Spain's great concern was for her south Italian possessions, which would be the first to suffer from any Ottoman fleet. In the 1590's, the Viceroy of Naples was habitually fearful because of reports that Cigala, the Turkish admiral, was likely to put to sea. As the Sultan's power waned, the Viceroy urged strong counter-measures to take a fitting revenge upon the house that had for so long threatened Christendom (110). The suggestion was favourably received in Spain, but there was never at any time a serious chance that it would be acted upon, even in the first, fine, careless rapture of the warlike Philip III. Doings in Naples and Sicily were to be of a completely defensive nature, and intended to counterbalance Cigala's strength, reports of which continued to be frequent. Appealing as the idea of a massive naval offensive

(107) AGS E2636/45; AGS E1874/sf, document of 30th November, 1601.

(108) Hess, *passim*.

(109) AGS E2636/36.

(110) AGS E1158/185.

was, the King and his Council were in no doubt that more pressing business lay elsewhere (111). The one hint that Spain would launch her own Crusade after all was quickly stifled. Spain's admiral in the Mediterranean, the Genoese Juan Andrea Doria, could not amass the forces that he wished because of the pressure of Spain's already great commitments, and he proved to be far too prudent to put all at risk by an ill-judged expedition (112). Even the report of the Sultan's death in 1604 did little to alter Spain's studied disinterest. The opportunity, as the Count of Miranda pointed out, was tempting:

"Your Majesty who, by the mercy of God, is in the flower of youth, valiant and healthy, able to labour and conserve the greatness and reputation of your monarchy and that of the holy zeal of your forebears and to gain credit by your royal actions, ought to do what you can to launch some enterprise and to fill the world with your fame."

(VM que por la misericordia de Dios se halla en la flor de su edad, gallardo y fuerte de salud para trabajar y conservar la grandeza y reputación de su monarquía y del santo celo de sus antepasados y ganar crédito de sus reales acciones debe hacer lo que pudiere para que se haga alguna jornada y henchir el mundo de su fama. (113) )

But he agreed with his colleague, Idiáquez: the time was not yet ripe. And even Philip himself, although he expressed himself willing to fight the Turk in person in East or West, agreed (114). The same reluctance is apparent in Spain's dealings with the representatives of the various Balkan states who periodically made their way to the Court to ask for help in rising against the Turk. Offers of vast new territories and immense income were made, and the appeals were often couched in pathetic terms, but the same answer was returned to all of them: the matter would have to wait (115).

(111) AGS E1885/62: "al consejo parece que los indicios de la declinación del imperio turquesco son tales que si las guerras con Inglaterra y rebeldes y el recelo de las cosas de Francia y la ocupación de las de Alemania y la falta de hacienda no desayudaran no se debiera perder tan buena ocasión."

(112) AGS E1931/107; AGS E1431/93.

(113) AGS E1857/35; qv AGS E1876/214.

(114) ibid.

(115) eg AGS E1097/80,81.

The one positive step taken against the Turk was hardly in the best traditions of the reconquista: an exchange of ambassadors took place with the Persians. As enemies of the Turk, they were useful allies; and as such, in Spanish eyes at least, the terms of the papal bull In coena domini could not be held to apply to them (116).

In North Africa, however, there was important work to be done. Spain had a long-standing interest in Algiers, a nest of Moorish and renegade Christian pirates who threatened Mediterranean shipping and had uncomfortably close relations with dissident moriscos. Charles V had once attempted to capture the city, and his lack of success made it even more of a touchstone. It was therefore natural for Philip III and the Council of State, soon after the former's accession, to place it high on the list of priorities: first England and Ireland, then Algiers (117). Almost certainly with this in mind - though the reports of Cigala's plans had some part to play - the King throughout 1600 ordered Doria and the Viceroy of Naples and Sicily to prepare large numbers of galleys (118). Through lack of resources, the plan was held over until the following year, and on Doria's advice, was definitely to be against Algiers (119). By February, 1601, the need had become pressing. Because of the Saluzzo crisis, troops had been mustered for a war that never came (120); and official feeling was that, unless Spain were to be made to appear ridiculous, the men would have to be used for some prestigious venture. It is a sign of the continued importance of the crusading ideal that, even whilst the wars with England and the Dutch were in full vigour, Algiers was chosen as a proper object for Spain's dwindling strength (121). Philip waxed lyrical. He ordered Doria to

(116) AGS E618/90; AGS E 1928/51.

(117) AGS E1855/sf, document of 20th June, 1599.

(118) AGS E1159/131; AGS E1931/417; AGS E1097/33; AGS E1931/76.

(119) AGS E1931/81; AGS E1430/264; AGS E1430/267; AGS E1931/87.

(120) qvi cap. iv.

(121) AGS E1874/sf, document of 17th February, 1601; the wisest of the councillors, however, Idiáquez, was not in favour.

destroy Algiers "so that there remain no memory of it nor a possibility of its reconstruction, that the place where so much offence has been given to God and so much harm to Christendom been inflicted be destroyed in just vengeance". It was for him "the most important objective for Christendom and for my interests" (122). His favourite, Lerma, was of a similar opinion, and referred to a session at which Algiers had been discussed as "the Council-meeting that I have attended with more pleasure than ever before" (123). The lateness of the season and heavy storms off Menorca, however, forced Doria to return to port (124). Nothing daunted, plans were at once made for a similar expedition in 1602. This time, further complications arose: Algiers was said to be on the alert, and the matter had to be abandoned (125). Once more, the only positive step taken in North Africa was to ally with an Islamic princeling, the King of Cuco, whose enmity with Algiers commended him to the Spanish authorities (126). As we shall see, Spain's Islamic policy was symbolic of the frustration of her aims in Europe.

(122) AGS E1931/123.

(123) AGS E1931/124; AGS E1931/103; AGS E1931/125.

(124) AGS E1431/122, 123.

(125) AGS E1874/sf, document of 30th November, 1601; AGS E1948/94.

(126) AGS E184/163; AGS E2023/114; Joulia San-Cyr.



## II. THE KEYSTONE

When Ferdinand the Catholic in 1496 arranged the marriage of his daughter, Joanna, to the Habsburg Archduke Philip the Fair, he can have had no inkling of the consequences. In 1500, and against all expectations, Joanna became heir-presumptive and succeeded her mother as Queen of Castile four years later. Philip's inheritance in Burgundy and the Low Countries therefore became joined to that of the Catholic Kings - two areas that were immensely different: the one the land of powerful towns, commerce, Gerson, Erasmus and the devotio moderna, and the other that of the great latifundists, the Crusade and the Inquisition. So long as each had little to do with the other, all was well. Philip the Fair did not long survive in Spain, and the new heir, Charles V, was wise enough to entrust the Low Countries to able members of his own family who resided in situ (1). The accession of Philip II, however, brought about a marked change. A thorough Castilian whose sense of duty encouraged him to rule as well as reign, he was not the man for Flanders; he neither understood the markedly-different temperament of his subjects there nor was able to cope with the internal tensions that had begun to manifest themselves in the previous reign. His inability to realize that he could not hope to impose the Castilian concept of monarchy upon an agglomeration of semi-independent provinces that knew no single title of ruler made revolt inevitable. Unfortunately, revolt was only the beginning of Philip's troubles. His desire to centralize and to repress aroused deep misgivings in France and England. A strong Spanish outpost in northern Europe would pose a grave threat: France saw herself about to be surrounded by Habsburg strongholds, and England feared the proximity of a country whose ruler was passionately opposed to Protestantism. Their consequent military intervention sealed Spain's doom: although she

(1) cf Rosenfeld passim.

poured money and men into the Netherlands, she enjoyed only partial success against the rebels, and at the time that our period begins the northern provinces, which had become the heart of the revolt, remained free.

Although total victory was increasingly unlikely, there was no question of giving in. Despite the immense problems - diplomatic, military, strategic and financial - that Spain faced, one aim remained constant. Peace might be made with France, though Henry IV be scheming and insincere, and with England, though Elizabeth be "la fiera de la iglesia" (2) and James a Protestant polemicist: but to make peace with the rebel Dutch was more than Spain was prepared to do. In the first place, the war was seen in religious terms. In 1590, during the siege of Paris, the ambassador Bernadino de Mendoza addressed a trenchant explanation of the Dutch revolt to the young Prince of Asturias, later to become Philip III:

"from what I have said about the rebels' impeding the exercise of our holy Roman Catholic apostolic faith as soon as they entered in the towns and villages, one may see whether the causes of the rebellion were, as some have said, the excesses of Spanish troops (when excesses there were) for which the churches, images and the persons of saintly clergy and religious - natives of the same country who were persecuted with such fury and bloodiness by the rebels - cannot be blamed; or the justice that the Duke of Alba took of the leaders of the first rising, preachers and ministers of heresies and iconoclasts as the people executed were; or the demand for the tenth penny, which was in consideration of the excessive expenses which His Majesty had incurred in the past war in defending the states from the rebels who threatened them, expelling them and conserving in peace and quietness the catholic religion in its pristine purity as His Majesty had sworn when recognized as the heir of the Emperor Charles V of glorious memory, their legitimate

(2) Novoa 206.

prince and sovereign lord. All goes to prove these charges to have been temporizing dissimulations and illusions to deceive the gullible and so allow the rebels to gain control of at least some of the provinces of the Low Countries, as we have seen subsequently, rooting and founding heresy there with greater effectiveness."

(Por lo que he apuntado arriba del impedir los rebeldes al momento que entraban en las villas y aldeas el ejercicio de nuestra santa fe católica apostólica romana se puede colegir si era la causa de la rebelión como algunos se habían dado a entender los excesos de la gente de guerra española, cuando hubiese algunos, de que no podían tener culpa las iglesias imágenes cuerpos de santos clérigos y religiosos siendo naturales de la misma tierra y a quien los rebeldes perseguían con tanto furor y sangre; ni asimismo la justicia que el duque de Alba había hecho de las cabezas de la primera conjuración predicantes y ministros de las herejías y rompedores de imágenes que fueron los personajes que se ejecutaron; ni pedir el derecho del décimo dinero en consideración de los excesivos gastos que SM había hecho en la guerra pasada por defender los estados de los rebeldes que los acometieron echándoles de ellos y conservar con paz y quietud en los países la religión católica en la pureza que siempre se había profesado en ellos cosa que SM les juró al reconocerle por heredero del emperador Carlos V de gloriosa memoria su padre y por su legítimo príncipe y soberano señor: lo cual arguye servirse de estos achaques para cubierta y engañar a los que por sus propias pasiones se dejaban persuadir de semejantes apariencias dando con esto tiempo al tiempo y calor para usurpar los rebeldes como se vió después algunas de las provincias de los Países Bajos si no podían todos y arraigar por este medio la herejía estableciéndola con más fundamento. (3) )

In the second place, for sixteenth-century governments, rebellion was "the puddle and sink of all crimes against God and man". If once a rebellion were officially admitted to have succeeded, the entire structure of politics and administration would be undermined: even Elizabeth, and later James, were conscience-stricken at sending help to the Dutch (4). There was also an important strategic consideration: French and English intervention had ironically made the Low Countries of even greater value to Spain. From this northern base, the hostile plans of the enemy, whether in Europe or the Indies, would be more easily frustrated (5). Not perceiving the real

(3) Mendoza 476. The same opinion is obvious in Carnero's work.

(4) qvi pp. 191, 203.

(5) cf AGS E2023/24; Alcocer i, 6: "Conviene atender a la conservación de los estados de Flandes ... por ser el freno con que se enfrena y reprime la potencia de franceses, ingleses y rebeldes, cuyas fuerzas si aquel escudo faltase cargarían contra VM y sus reinos por diversas partes de que se seguirían mayores gastos y daños."

cause of the enmity, Spain mistakenly thought that, in the long run, she would save great quantities of money and of trouble by keeping the Low Countries. Moreover, after the cession made to Albert and Isabella in 1598, there was a fourth reason: the King of Spain could not possibly leave his close relatives - his sister and brother-in-law - in the lurch, for the solidarity of the House of Habsburg was a thing much to be prized (6). But perhaps the most powerful motive of all was that of pride. Flanders had become the cock-pit in which Spain had confronted her unscrupulous enemies, the tomb in which money and men had been laid to rest (7). Under no circumstances could Spain afford to back down, if she were to retain the self-respect that was her life-blood. In the last analysis, as her changing relations with France and England were to shew, religion and traditional francophobia could be put on one side: but the consuming desire to have one's due from one's own subjects could not (8). Of all her commitments, that of the Low Countries was the most important and that for which sacrifices were most willingly made (9).

In the last years of his reign, however, Philip II had begun to realize that some new expedient had to be found in order to end the apparent stalemate with the Dutch. He had come to the opinion that most of the troubles had been caused by the fact that he had left Flanders in 1559 and had never returned. By 1595, he could no longer remedy this personally, nor could he send his seventeen-year-old son and heir. Instead, he appointed his favourite

- (6) AGS E617/213: "...lo que importa que el mundo vea por las obras en lo que VM estima a sus hermanos ;" AGS E2023/42; Alcocer i, 155: "Por ninguna cosa siento tanto el estado de mi hacienda como por no poderse proveer a mis hermanos con la largueza y brevedad que yo quisiera."
- (7) Novoa 164: "... Holanda y Zelanda sepulcro de españoles y tesoros donde por espacio de 59 anos te (sc. España) has obligado por el honor de tu príncipe a resistir y castigar sus desacatos, rebeldías y desobediencias a la iglesia; donde todos los príncipes de Europa disimulada y maliciosamente te han hecho la guerra con la espada y la pluma de la herejía..."
- (8) cf AGS E2023/126, opinion of Philip III; Alcocer i 252.
- (9) cf AGS E2023/31.

nephew, the Archduke Albert, to the governorship of the Low Countries in the hope that military ability, lineage and social standing would happily combine to solve a serious situation (10). Within the year, he had decided to take a more drastic step: Albert was to marry the Infanta Isabella, and they were to rule in the north as joint sovereigns (11). Philip hoped two things by this arrangement. First, he expected that the United Provinces would be less reluctant to return to their due obedience if they and their southern compatriots could enjoy the prospect of a measure of independence from the Spanish crown (12). No less important was the desire to save money: Philip seems genuinely to have believed that the cession would reduce Spain's financial burden, and it is significant that the first mention of the match between Albert and Isabella came soon after his declaration of bankruptcy in 1596 (13). The cession, however, was absolute in neither theory nor practice, and there was no question of setting up a new kingdom: Albert had tentatively suggested the conferment of a royal title, but Philip had not responded (14). The Low Countries were given to Isabella in fee and as a simple donation to form her dowry, the significant legal act being executed by the bride, her father and her brother: Albert's task was nothing more than to marry her and so enter into his wife's property. It is open to question whether Philip envisaged the founding of a new regnant branch of his dynasty. Some, then and later, asserted that he did not expect issue of the marriage. But at the time of its arrangement in 1596, Albert was 38 and Isabella 30, and although neither had been married before there was no reason to suppose that they would be childless. Nevertheless, careful provision was made to ensure that only offspring of both the partners would inherit the Low Countries, and it was stipulated that if Albert pre-deceased

(10) AHN E1414/sf, document of 21st July, 1595; cf AGS E2023/126, opinion of Chinchón; Alcocer i 252.

(11) AHN E3028/13.

(12) cf Cabrera Felipe II iv 285; Novoa 73. It is significant that the Estates of Lille, Douai and Orchiers thought that the cession would herald a speedy peace (Sarum xiv 50).

(13) AGS E634/25; AGS E634/15.

(14) AGS E615/96; AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/146.

his wife, the dowry would revert to the Spanish crown. Two secret conditions imposed further restrictions: first, that the King of Spain keep possession of certain towns, amongst them Antwerp, Ghent and Cambrai; and secondly, that the Archduke swear to uphold Roman Catholicism and refuse to have Protestant ministers or retainers (15).

In practice as well as in theory, the political position of the new appanage was definitely inferior to that of Spain. As long as the war with the Dutch continued, the Spaniards paid the piper and called the tune. The army, the single most important institution in the Netherlands, was financed and directed from Spain and administered by Spanish officials. Albert's secretary, Mancicidor, had been a protégé of Idiáquez (16). Above all, the Archdukes were wholly dutiful members of the House of Habsburg, and at no time in our period was there any question of their acting against the policy of the King of Spain. Albert, the son of the Emperor Maximilian II, had been brought up at Philip II's Court and seems to have taken his uncle as his model. At the age of thirty, he had become the first governor of Portugal and had dealt with the English attack upon Lisbon in 1589 with considerable resolution, in Hume's view combining "terrorism, energy and promptness" to save the situation (17). His bravery in the family cause was further demonstrated at the Battle of the Dunes in 1600, at which he won the esteem of Fleming and Spaniard alike by being wounded as the result of a hand-to-hand engagement (18). Little is known of his personal relations with Philip III and Lerma, though he had been recalled from Portugal in

(15) AHN E2894/6, 21, 22, 25, 27; BN 18634/44; CODDIN xlii 216 seqq. The secret clauses were held to be so important that even the highly-trusted Zúñiga was only informed of their nature after his arrival in the Low Countries (AGS E2023/18; Alcocer i 79).

(16) Lefèvre RBPhH 1925.

(17) Hume The Year.... 50.

(18) cf AGS E2023/124; Alcocer i 30. There are no grounds for the usual belief that Albert's defeat led to a decline in his standing with the Spanish authorities: all indications are to the contrary. A similar error has been made as to the date of the battle, which took place on 2nd, and not 22nd, July. cf DHE.

1593 in order to act as the young Philip's mentor and in that capacity would have come across Lerma, and from 1596 maintained regular and amicable contact with both of them (19). The face that Albert presented to the world was wholly Spanish. The papal nuncio in Brussels, Bentivoglio, saw in him another Philip II - slow, discreet, of great dignity and respectability, and inspiring respect rather than love in his subjects. In many ways, he was perhaps not ideally suited to the position he occupied: "Flanders requires a prince more affable and tractable, and the wars there more efficacious and more resolute actions than are those of the Archduke"(20). But his loyalty, which like his piety was above reproach, was that of a Habsburg born and bred. Isabella's character differed from that of her husband only in degree. Her affability and graciousness made her the more popular partner, and she shewed considerable ability in the conduct of affairs, as was to be proved after Albert's death in 1621, "Having in her masculine spirit, yea even a greater resolution than the Archduke." (21). The blood of Isabella the Catholic seems to have run true in her veins. In her report of the Battle of the Dunes, she expressed a wifely concern at her husband's misadventure, but continued,

"I must say that he has improved his reputation so much by fighting in person as he did that, after I saw that he was well, I did not wish that things had transpired differently, no, not at any price; and for this reason I am glad that it was a sword-wound, for this shews that he fought hand-to-hand, not with an arquebus from afar but with his blade. I hope that this blood that he has shed for Our Lord will become its own compensation, as it is now in process of doing: for it has so heartened our subjects that they say they will sell their children so as to help us."

(19) BN 687; AGS E615/133,134.

(20) Bentivoglio 52.

(21) *ibid.*

(Pero también os confieso que ha ganado tanta reputación con haber peleado con su persona como lo ha hecho que después que le he visto bueno no quisiera que lo hubiera dejado de hacer por nada; y así me he holgado de que la herida que sacó fuese cuchillada pues se ve por ella que peleó por sus manos y no con arcabuz de lejos sino con su espada. Espero que esta sangre que ha derramado por nuestro señor nos la ha de pagar como lo va haciendo ya que ha puesto tanto ánimo en nuestros vasallos que dicen que venderán hasta sus hijos por ayudarnos. (22) )

Her relations with her brother and Lerma were of the most cordial, and her letters to the latter especially shew a high degree of intimacy. Isabella felt that she could reprove Lerma for over-working, and it was to him that she turned for support when she and her husband wished to scotch the proposal to give the army command to someone other than Albert: "I am certain that this proposal has not come out of your head," she insisted (23). In this light we must judge the Archdukes' policies. Professor Carter's assertion that most of Spain's policy-making took place in Brussels rather than in Madrid takes no account of the facts: Albert and Isabella had neither inclination nor opportunity to disregard the orders of the head of their family (24). Pirenne's view, though more brutal, is nearer the truth: "la Belgique n'était plus qu'un gouvernement espagnol." (25)

The Flemings themselves, however, were far less dependable. With a long tradition of self-government, they possessed a highly-developed system of civil administration that culminated in the Estates-General and the Council of State. Neither of these bodies was much in favour of Spain's presence in their midst. Like every body responsible for the voting of subsidies, the Estates-General were greatly reluctant to meet the demands made of them (26). Admittedly, they were no partisans of the Dutch: Albert noted that after his defeat at the Dunes, they had shewn themselves eager

(22) BRAH xlvii 280.

(23) BRAH xlvii 440.

(24) Carter Belgian Autonomy... 245, 254; cf infra 190.

(25) Pirenne 248.

(26) AGS E617/74.



to finance ten thousand Walloon infantry, three thousand cavalry and all the garrisons of the Low Countries (some eight or ten thousand men) to the tune of a million ducats a year (27). But their general view was that the war had gone on for far too long. The world's most powerful monarch had failed to reduce the rebels to their due obedience but refused to acknowledge the fact. Instead, official circles seemed to think, as one Flemish writer put it, "that the subjects had to be weakened so as to strengthen the prince," and that force was the only weapon to use - "whereby this poor country has lapsed into ancient Chaos." (28) Mutinies, disorders in otherwise peaceful areas, poverty and gross inconvenience were being inflicted upon them for the sake of Spanish pride (29). By 1600, the demands of the Estates-General had reached unparalleled proportions, and an attempt was made by them to begin negotiations of their own with the Dutch (30).

Apart from this turbulent and occasional body, "of many heads, more changeable and inconstant in their whims than a weather-cock in its movements", Spain could look to the nobility and the ducal councils for a further reflexion of Flemish opinion. The principal nobles were a mixed assortment. Mansfelt and Barlaymont could be ruled out, the one through age and the other through ineptitude. Aremberg was undoubtedly the best-disposed of all, but unfortunately combined mediocre ability with a chronic need to meet the financial demands made of him by a numerous family. The two most able nobles, Havre and Aerschot, could not be depended upon. The former was said to be greedy for power and too much inclined towards making peace with the Dutch, yet though his motives were suspect his good-will was essential. Aerschot posed a more difficult problem. A former Protestant,

(27) AGS E617/74. The offer, however, was made on condition that the Spanish authorities had no part in the matter (AGS E622/176,177).

(28) BN 2346/271.

(29) AGS E617/93,97,98.

(30) Brants, 33,62.

his wife lived in the United Provinces and he courted the popularity of the masses, posing as the tribune of a troubled people; he was clever, ambitious and - horribile dictu - "inclined to novelties" (31). The Council of State was scarcely more useful. Besides Mansfelt and Havre, it included the aged hispanophile d'Asonville and two opponents of Spain, the Abbots of S.Vaz and Meroles. The key figure was undoubtedly the President Richardot, the best-informed and most able of all the Flemish statesmen. Yet even he could not be entirely trusted. Although he had been the right-hand man of the Duke of Parma during his governorship and had thereby made enemies of a number of his compatriots, he was deep in the counsels of the Abbot of S.Vaz and of the best of the secretaries of state, Moriensarte, who shared the Abbot's political sympathies. The higher civil servants presented the same problem. The two remaining secretaries of state, Verreyken and Pratz, were well-disposed towards Spain but either too deliberate or lacking in character. The Treasury Board, on the other hand, had nothing to redeem it. With two old men and two others of dubious allegiance, it contained only one Spanish sympathizer. The sixth member, Champagny, was a choleric hispanophobe. Most serious of all was the unwelcome fact that the Treasurer-General, Dricourt, the man who of all his colleagues knew the true workings of the financial system, had been a violent opponent of the former captain-general, Fuentes, and was thoroughly Flemish in his sympathies (32). And as though to emphasize the disparity of outlook between Spain and the Flemish, the government's official language was French, and was so used by Albert in his official dealings (33).

Whilst remaining entirely obedient to the will of Spain, Albert and Isabella nevertheless came gradually to have a good deal of sympathy with their subjects. They had, admittedly, started badly. The act of cession

(31) AGS E612/114.

(32) AGS E612/113.

(33) eg BN 687/138.

had been regarded with some misgivings in Flanders, and Albert's first entry into Brussels as Archduke without the mantle and coronet of the Dukes of Brabant and with a Spanish, and not a civic, military escort, caused some ill-feeling (34). Moreover, far from fulfilling the Flemish hope that the traditional forms of provincial government would be restored to their former glory, Albert and Isabella seemed to use their powers only to strengthen government at the centre (35). Acting under a commission given to him by Philip II, Domingo de Orbea set out from Spain in July, 1597, as Superintendent of Finances to conduct a thorough investigation of the Flemish Treasury; the result was the pressing of charges against forty-four corrupt officials and a good deal of unpopularity (36). Legal codification was begun, to be completed in 1611; the Estates-General, after the stormy sessions of 1600, were not called again; and the needs of the army seemed to take precedence over everything else. But three issues were to arise that tended to set the Archdukes against Spain and thus, in a way, to identify them with the Flemings. The first of these had its origin in the question of sending an aide to Albert after the Battle of the Dunes. For although the Archduke had earned unstinted praise for his bravery, his being wounded filled the Council of State in Valladolid with concern: if his injuries had been fatal, Isabella would have been left alone to cope with both the army and the state. It was therefore suggested that, as the Duke of Parma had originally been sent to assist Don John of Austria, so some military man be sent to Albert. At first, the Council did not set their sights high: the names they suggested were those of soldiers, and no political ability was looked for (37). When, however, the matter was raised once more after eighteen months as part of the proposals for the general reform of the army, the continued financial and military setbacks made the

(34) CSPV ix 839.

(35) Brants cap. iii.

(36) AGS E615/127,128; AGS E616/200-244; AGS E617/175.

(37) AGS E617/208,209; Alcocer i 33; Mesía, the Marquess of Santa Cruz, D.Alonso de Idiáquez and D. Pedro de Toledo were mentioned.

Council reflect more deeply. The King had suggested the names of George Basta and Don Luis de Velasco, who were of the same type as those named in 1600 for the post. The Council, without voicing any criticism of Albert, shewed their opinion by unanimously nominating the Constable of Castile, who was both a distinguished soldier and a statesman: for them, the time had come to change commanders (38). Philip agreed: but because the Constable's ostensible task was to give advice to Villamediana on the conduct of negotiations with England, Albert and Isabella did not wake up to the fact that he was intended also as their chief adviser until June, 1604 (39). Their dismay was then considerable:

"not only is it greatly offensive to our reputation, but is also a clear sign of the scant satisfaction which His Majesty has of the conscientiousness with which I proceed in all things and with which I try to order matters here in his service's best interest."

(No sólo es en gran ofensa de nuestra reputación pero clara demostración de la poca satisfacción que SM tiene del cuidado con que yo procedo en todo y procuro encaminar las cosas de aquí como conviene a su servicio. (40) )

But thanks partly to their fervent appeal to Lerma and partly to general surprise at their vehemence, the blow to their pride was not delivered (41).

The second issue, although it was never mentioned outside the innermost circles of the Spanish government, was of still greater importance. The cession of the Low Countries had always had its opponents, who felt that "this pearl in Your Majesty's crown" was too precious to be surrendered into other hands (42). As time went on, their case became stronger. Whereas Philip II had hoped to save money by the new arrangement, this was not to be: in 1600, at least four-and-a-half million ducats had been sent to Flanders,

(38) AGS E622/237. The Constable had for some years maintained a friendly correspondence with Albert. AGR SEG 513.

(39) cf CSPV x. 193.

(40) BN 687/339; cf BRAH xlvii 440.

(41) AGS E634/16.

(42) AGS E617/212.

in contrast to 3,600,000 in 1596 (43). The United Provinces were no more inclined to make peace, and their military defeat was as remote a prospect as ever (44). Moreover, Spain was never entirely happy about the extent of her control over Flanders. The behaviour of the Estates-General in 1600 had suggested that, left to themselves, the Flemings would sue for peace at any price. And slight doubts had begun to be entertained about the Archdukes themselves. Albert's manifest desire to avoid a war with France during the Saluzzo crisis (45) had made the Spanish authorities wonder whether his support could be counted upon if hostilities were in fact to break out. The Spanish ambassador in Flanders, Don Baltasar de Zúñiga, assured them that their fear was unjustified and that Albert's primary concern had been to avoid over-taxing Philip's already strained resources (46). Whilst accepting Zúñiga's opinion, the members of the junta de tres felt that here was food for thought. Albert and Isabella might be wholly trustworthy - but what of their heirs? Could Spain be certain that the Low Countries would invariably follow the policies of Madrid? The fact that the Archdukes were still childless almost seemed a sign that Heaven intended the cession to be a temporary expedient (47). The junta was therefore strongly in favour of re-incorporating the Low Countries into the Spanish crown at the earliest opportunity - probably after a truce had been arranged with the Dutch. Philip was entirely in agreement. But the plan, as so many others, could not be put into effect. In the first place, the truce with the Dutch was not to be achieved until 1609. In the second place, there seemed to be no obvious means of compensating the Archdukes. Family pride and the lingering hope that Albert would be elected King of

(43) AGS E626/43; AGS CJH 358/sf.

(44) cf Isabella's reported disillusion early in 1602 (Winwood i 379).

(45) qvi *cap. iv*.

(46) AGS E619/76.

(47) AGS E634/25: "viendo que con la falta de sucesión de la señora Infanta los quiere Dios volver a esta corona..."

the Romans (48) demanded that they be not treated shabbily: but what could they be given? Isabella was not likely to win the crown of England, and indeed shewed no signs of ambition in that direction (49); and Catalonia, Portugal and all the Italian states were felt to be unsuitable (50). Nothing was therefore ever said to the Archdukes, but suspicions on both sides did nothing to relieve a growing tension.

The third and most important issue was that of relations with the Dutch. For all his excellent qualities, Albert sometimes seemed easily led. Even Zúñiga, no enemy to the Archduke, regretted the influence that Flemish ministers wielded over him (51). The Flemings badly wanted peace - with England and with the Dutch - and their attitude seemed to Spain to be infecting that of the Archdukes. In fact, this was unjust and inaccurate. Unlike Philip and his Council, Albert had personally to face the exigencies of the war. He, better than they, knew what a mutiny, a shortage of money or a military defeat did to Spanish interests; and it is significant that his eagerness to reduce his commitments was eventually shared by all those Spaniards who went north to watch over the diplomatic situation - Zúñiga, Villamediana and the Constable himself (52). Whereas the Council of State merely bewailed the difficulties, Albert had to solve them. The crux of the matter lay in the size and regularity of Spain's remittances to pay for the war. Although remittances of 600,000 ducats a-year less were proposed as from 1596, Spain was still sending an annual three million ducats (53). Sometimes, the remittances were greater: in the single year 1600, no less than 4,581,295 ducats left the Castilian Treasury for Flanders (54). But the truth was that, with frequent bursts of extraordinary expenditure, the

(48) qvi p. 163. In order to support the dignity, Albert would need to have adequate financial and territorial standing.

(49) qvi p. 167.

(50) AGS E634/10, 15.

(51) AGS E2288/sf, document of 15th September, 1601.

(52) qvi pp. 168, 209.

(53) AGS CJH 358/sf, document of November (?), 1596; CJH 380/sf, document of 21st October, 1598; AGS E2023/123.

(54) AGS E626/43.

buying-off of mutineers and the plethora of pensions awarded to faithful servants, the money was plainly inadequate. Indeed, there was not enough with which to pay the normal standing army. In 1604, it was calculated that 25,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry and the garrisons, artillery and commissariat cost 328,000 escudos each month, a sum that was not covered by the income of the military authorities (55). The Spanish financial system was unable to cope with the strain. Constant letters from Brussels to Castile urged the need for the prompt receipt of more money. Not infrequently, a grim picture was painted. "There is scarcely a real left," wrote Zúñiga on one occasion in 1603; and in the previous year, one of particularly numerous appeals, Isabella was forced to try to pawn her jewellery, remarking to Lerma, "You unquestionably have a thousand reasons for saying what you do about these merchants: they are terrible." (56) Mutinies were a constant source of anxiety (57). Not only was the routine of campaigning broken and discipline badly damaged, but the enemy was not slow to take advantage: one Spanish official, indeed, regarded mutinies as the United Provinces' most powerful weapon - in token of this, the forts of S. Andries and Crèvecoeur were sold to the Dutch by Walloon mutineers (58). Not surprisingly, the general war-effort sorely lacked success. Admittedly, from 1598 onwards, there was a pause in the series of great campaigns, for neither side had sufficient resources or skill much to alter their frontiers (59); the Battle of the Dunes, the only major field engagement in our period, made no difference

(55) AGS E2868/sf, document of 4th December, 1604. This was including a grant of 75,185 escudos received from Flemish sources.

(56) BRAH xlvi 344. The depredations of the financiers were considerable. At one meeting of the junta de tres it was asserted that, of a budget of five million ducats, three million would be spent on the army, one on the mutineers and one in interest (AGS E634/9).

(57) Parker Spanish Road appendix J.

(58) AGS E617/85: "lo que ha descompuesto y desautorizado este ejército es en cinco años veinticuatro motines con tanta libertad que la principal confianza de los enemigos consiste en la conversión de nuestras armas contra nosotros; sacan condiciones extraordinarias con que crecen sus sueldos y créditos a grandes sumas y hacen otras tales desórdenes con que no son creíbles ni es justo lleguen a oídos de VM." AGS E617/86, 93.

(59) For the Dutch v. Den Tex i 217.

to either, for the Dutch were unable to follow up their advantage through lack of funds. Yet in the frontier skirmishing that still took place, the Dutch were the more successful party: S. Andries, Crèvecoeur, Rheinberg, Carpen and Grave were lost to them, and although after a long and difficult siege Albert's forces took Ostende in September, 1604, the capture was to be more than offset by the simultaneous loss of Sluys. Small wonder that Isabella was worried:

"we are paralyzed with the fear that the cavalry and garrisons will mutiny, especially here in Brussels. I have no doubts of it, for I know that they are owed more than 100,000 ducats even though they are only two companies. I do not know what was done with the money that was coming into this country for, as you so rightly say, more has been paid by my brother than in the many years of my father's lifetime. But since our blood is hot, as the saying goes, this is what most upsets us and makes us want to see all this solved, so that my brother's Treasury can gain a respite, the more so since it is in its present state. If I could see my brother so refreshed that he could put up a resistance, this would not worry me in the least: but with things as they are, I cannot but be preoccupied."

(Estamos muertos de miedo que ... se ha de amotinar la caballería y guarniciones, particularmente la de aquí; yo lo tengo por cierto porque sé que les deben más que cien mil ducados con no ser sino dos compañías que yo no sé que se hacía de tanto dinero como entraba en estos estados pues, como vos decís muy bien, mi hermano ha pagado más que se pagó en muchos años en vida de mi padre ... pero a nosotros como nos hierve la sangre, como dice el refrán, esto es lo que más nos duele y lo que más nos hace ver esto en sosiego por que pueda descansar la hacienda de mi hermano y más estando como está ... y si yo viese a mi hermano tan descansado que pudiese resistirles no me daría esto cuidado ninguno: pero estando como está no puedo dejar de dármela. (60) )

The Archdukes' desire to see an end to the war was to a large extent shared by the authorities in Spain. There had already been some attempts to come to a proper understanding. The Netherlands' status as imperial



fiefs provided a useful excuse for the intervention of the Emperor who, as one who was on the fringes of the conflict, could act as intermediary. In 1574, 1579, 1591, 1592 and latterly in 1596, attempts on his part had been made to bring the combatants to the conference-table (61). Thus far, nothing had come of them, despite Philip II's hopes. There were, in any case, limits to the acceptability of this mode of negotiation. When in 1602 it was suggested that the United Provinces once more become full imperial states which, nevertheless, would pay dues to Albert and Isabella, only Idiáquez in the Council approved of the idea. His colleagues, Lerma amongst them, saw the force of his argument that it was better to lose a limb than sacrifice the whole body, but felt that so drastic a solution should be saved as a last resort (62). More direct methods of treating, however, posed their own problems, for it was impossible that the United Provinces would accede to the demands that Spain was determined to make of them. There was never any doubt in the latter's mind that the Dutch were rebels whose only course was to return to what Philip II termed "the obedience due to God and their King" (63). This was not to say that Philip was not prepared to make concessions: indeed, at the end of his life, and wishing to give his favourite daughter a worthy inheritance, by his own lights he offered to give way a good deal. Realizing that, to begin with at least, Protestantism could not be extirpated in the United Provinces, he thought of agreeing to some form of religious toleration, "with God's help subsequently to pluck more fruit" (64). His willingness was shared by his son's advisers who, regarding it as the means of gaining toleration for the Roman Catholics in the north, therefore spoke of success rather than

(61) AGS E702/sf, documents of 12th September, 1595 and 4th June, 1596.

(62) AGS E634/15: "dijo que en el estado presente en que tanta aparencia hay de perderse todo el cuerpo por ventura sería menos mal cortar un miembro de él." cf AGS E621/24; AGS E620/259; AGS E2224<sup>2</sup>/246; AGS E2288/sf, document of 18th July, 1602.

(63) AGS E2223/25.

(64) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/202.

compromise (65). Important though this decision was, there were more important points that were left undiscussed. What did Spain mean by "due obedience", and how far would the Dutch keep their independence? On the one occasion when arrangements for the future government of the reconciled provinces were discussed, the matter was dismissed airily: "se podría dar buena orden." (66)

Not surprisingly, the Dutch were consistently reluctant to come to terms. During the negotiations that led up to the Treaty of Vervins, both France and Spain had wished to see them join in (67). Henry wished to retain his allies' confidence by giving them the opportunity of peace, but was to be disappointed:

"I have found the Dutch, from the day of their arrival to the day of their departure, so set upon war that there has been no way of moderating them nor of inclining them towards peace."

(J'ai trouvé les autres depuis le premier jour de leur arrivé jusqu'à leur partement si résolus à la guerre qu'il n'y a eu moyen de les fléchir ni disposer à la paix. (68) )

For the Spaniards, this was something of a blow. Quite apart from Henry's insistence, they had early realized for themselves that peace with one of the allies meant, ideally, peace with all: for if France were free from war but Spain forced to continue it elsewhere, Henry would suck out no small advantage (69). But the Dutch took no part in the discussions at Vervins, and with an ill grace refused the truce that was offered to them (70). After the abortive negotiations with England at Boulogne - from which the Dutch were purposely excluded - another attempt to meet them was made (71).

(65) AGS E2511/13, consulta of 13th September, 1600. For the moment, however, Albert was to speak of religious compromise as though it were purely an idea of his own (AGS E2511/18).

(66) AGS E634/9.

(67) qvi p. 84 seqq.

(68) IM iv 973.

(69) AGS E2855/sf, documents of 13th November, 1596, and 17th December, 1597. qvi p. 85.

(70) IM iv 992.

(71) AGS E2224<sup>2</sup>/57.

The precedence dispute between the two parties at Boulogne had brought home to them the desirability of holding any future conference in the United Provinces - to England the land of an ally, to Spain part of her own dominions, and to both a ground where each could gracefully give precedence to the other. This, and the shock of the Battle of the Dunes, had made Archdukes and diplomats alike eager to try to come to terms with the Dutch (72). The authorities in Valladolid were largely sympathetic. The situation in Flanders was nothing less than desperate, and the Council was forced to admit that "in the present state of Your Majesty's Treasury, it is impossible to continue the war for much longer" (73). Albert was therefore sent powers to make peace with the rebels, and reference was made in the text to their former exemplary vassalship and Spain's deep regret that they had been led astray by evil counsels (74).

A few days later, however, the presence of the King and of Idiáquez in the Council brought about an important amendment to the plan. To make peace with the rebels would undoubtedly be difficult: Spain would be concerned for her reputation and, to judge from their rebuff to the representatives of the Flemish Estates-General at Bergen-op-Zoom, the Dutch were not disposed to compromise (75). Spain's interests would be better served by a simple truce. Since matters of high principle would thus not be broached, the Dutch would not be able to profit by the low ebb of the Archdukes' fortunes. Spanish troops would be able to stay in Flanders to restore their strength; and the religious question could be left for a more opportune time - for, as the councillors observed, "it would be an insecure foundation to begin with so pernicious an act and one that set such a bad example and that brought with it consequences so unwelcome" as to be forced into making

(72) AGS E2288/sf, document of 17th August, 1600.

(73) AGS E2511/22.

(74) AGS E2907/sf, document of 25th September, 1600.

(75) qvi; Den Tex i 294-6.

improper concessions on this score (76). The Council firmly believed that the way to a Dutchman's heart was through his purse; as Idiáquez pithily remarked, "there can be no doubt that personal interest weighs more with those folk than religion or any other consideration" (77). They therefore hoped that great rewards would be reaped from re-admitting the Dutch to trade with Spain's European dominions, as would be the case if a truce were concluded with them. Philip and his advisers did not much elaborate upon what would happen when the truce expired. From their constant reference to "la verdadera reducción de aquellas provincias", we must deduce that they expected that the United Provinces, having grown fat and torpid, would fall into Spain's hand like a ripe apple (78).

The decision to press for a long truce rather than for peace, however, was not easily accepted by Albert and his Flemish advisers. Many were convinced that a truce would only tie their hands: Dutch aggression would continue unofficially and nothing could be done in reply, for the Habsburgs never excelled at guerilla warfare by land or, more important, by sea. Albert therefore told Zúñiga quite plainly that he saw the choice as being only two-fold: continue the war or make peace (79). Other, more nationalistic, Flemings had their own reasons for preferring peace to a truce; for them, the primary aim was to rid themselves completely of a need for the Spanish troops that had done so much to disrupt the traditional life and liberties of the Low Countries (80). The reaction of the Spanish authorities was predictably horrified. Albert's stubbornness was putting at risk all

(76) AHN E libro 77/217; AGS E634/25.

(77) AGS E621/1. cf the similarly low opinion of the Protestant English in 1603 and 1604, *infra*.

(78) cf AGS E2511/13: "si una vez comienzan los naturales ... a gustar del provecho de la quietud y del comercio que de ella se les seguirá será mucho más fácil el reducirlos a la verdadera obediencia." AGS E634/15: "se viniese a domesticarlos y reducirlos a la verdadera y debida obediencia de su señor natural."

(79) AGS E2288/sf, document of 15th September, 1601.

(80) AGS E621/261.

Spain's interests, as well as his own; it also almost seemed possible that he was thinking of forcing Spain's hand, making peace and consolidating his own position, all at a time when the advantages of re-uniting Spain and Flanders were becoming increasingly clear (81). The Archdukes' ingratitude was sickening:

"the junta regrets, as it ought, that although Your Majesty has done so much for your kinsmen and at so great and damaging a cost, even robbing yourself of meat so as to provide for them, they do not acknowledge the fact as they ought and are so blind that they forget the pressures that beset Your Majesty's Treasury."

(La junta ha sentido como es justo que habiendo VM hecho tanto como se sabe por sus hermanos con tan gran gasto y daño de su hacienda hasta quitarla de su comida por darla a SSAA no lo reconozcan como deben y estén tan ciegos que no se acuerden del apretado estado de la hacienda de VM. (82) )

Worse still, despite the fact that the English, like the Dutch themselves, were known to favour the expedient of a truce, the Flemish envoy Coemans in a recent visit to London had refused to discuss the possibility of anything less than a full peace (83). In the end, and as always, Albert bowed to his brother-in-law's command and undertook to arrange a truce, albeit under the ostensible guise of a peace; and negotiations of the most general sort were placed in the hands of the Admiral of Aragon, Mendoza, and one of his lieutenants, with Spain keeping well in the background (84).

Matters took a different turn, however, with Spain's announcement of a tariff of 30% to be imposed upon a wide range of goods (85). This could not but vastly complicate Mendoza's task. The whole point of the truce was to allow the Dutch to enjoy the benefits of free trade with Spain, whereas the tariff would inevitably make the Dutch, and the rest of Europe,

(81) AGS E634/9.

(82) AGS E634/11.

(83) *ibid.*

(84) AGS E620/7, 10, 61, 261, 262; CODDIN xlii 205.

(85) qvi pp. 132. 213.

doubt Spain's good faith (86). The miscalculation was followed shortly afterwards by a marked deterioration in Albert's military position, culminating in the loss of Grave as the result of a shortage of gunpowder (87). With considerable annoyance, the Council decided that the plan for a truce would have to be dropped, observing acidly that if Albert had not delayed in obeying Philip, the arrangements would have been completed long before (88). Attempts to bring the Dutch into the Treaty of London were no more successful. Despite all his expressed willingness to do all that he could to reconcile the rebels to Spain, James I's only firm offer was to obtain a short truce of between three and four months in order to allow the United Provinces to decide whether or not they wished to take part. This was totally unacceptable to Spain. The siege of Ostende was in a critical state, and a short truce would allow the Dutch to bring up reinforcements: if there were to be a truce, it should be for a period of years (89). On this point, however, the Dutch were as obdurate as ever.

One further solution to the Dutch problem remained: that of striking at the foundation of their prosperity. In the years immediately following the outbreak of the revolt, the amount of trade in the hands of the northern provinces of Holland and Zealand had increased sharply. By 1594, 58% of the Baltic trade was in the hands of their middlemen, who kept the whole of Europe supplied with essential commodities - wood, cordage and Polish grain (90). Foreigners were not blind to the United Provinces' astonishing commercial power; in 1601, the Englishman John Keymor wrote,

"There were in Holland (sic) 126,000 mariners twenty years past, since which time their shipping and mariners are mightily increased; every town is grown as great again as they were before the wars and beautified

(86) AGS E620/256.

(87) AGS E620/139.

(88) AGS E2023/69; Alcocer i 232.

(89) AGS E2512/27.

(90) Sluiter 167, quoting Sound Toll statistics.

with an infinite number of sumptuous buildings, enriched with all kinds of merchandise and coins; and where they had but one haven before in a town before the wars, they have now two or three, and yet not able to hold their ships if they were all at home at one time ... They make their landmen seamen, their seamen fishermen, their fishermen mariners, mariners merchants, and of their merchants statesmen, to govern and make their country prosper by long experience (91)."

Spain, even more than her neighbours, depended a good deal upon the goods carried by the Dutch. Her increasingly-precarious agriculture made necessary a heavy dependence upon imported wood and, in times of famine, grain (92). Only as late as 1585 did Philip II see fit to declare an embargo upon the rebel vessels that visited Spanish ports, and even this seems to have been a dead letter within three years (93). Further embargoes were declared in 1595 and, by Philip III, in 1598, but proved to be no more successful (94). Despite reports that the Dutch were severely incommoded - not only by the closure of a large and lucrative market, but also because they themselves could no longer buy the Spanish salt that was vital for their important herring industry - Spain and her possessions were clearly suffering more (95). In 1595, the city of Seville petitioned the King to lift the embargo in the interests of their trade: for, in the absence of a native merchant marine, the Dutch had come to play a key role, and their exclusion could not be sufficiently compensated for by the merchants of the Hanse (96). A worried Andreas (the interim governor of the Low Countries during Albert's absence in 1598) reported that the Low Countries would lose 200,000 escudos a-year because of it (97). Taking more energetic measures, the Archduke

(91) Keymor 225,227.

(92) Salomon; Klein; Moret; Sarum viii 536.

(93) Sluiter 169.

(94) AGS E174/sf, document of 1595; AGS E2223/34; AGS GA 561/sf, document of 24th October, 1598; AGS E1095/280.

(95) AGS E611/168; AGS E617/77,127; AGS E620/100.

(96) AGS E174/sf, document of 29th September, 1595; cf AGS E611/9.

(97) AGS E615/42.

Albert horrified the Council by granting passports and licences to Dutch merchants in an attempt to keep open the trade in fish, cheese, butter and wine upon which his subjects depended (98). Equally great was the problem of enforcing the ban. A lack of honest port officials in Spain and a host of Dutch subterfuges in obtaining passports - the Dutch could pose as Danes or members of the Hanse - made their total exclusion impossible (99). Attempting to profit by their bitter experience, the Council of State early in 1603 decided to change their tactics. A Spanish official in the Flemish Treasury, Juan de Gaona, had suggested that the Dutch be re-admitted to full trade with Spain and the Low Countries, but on payment of a new tariff of 30%. There were a good many objections: it would put paid to hopes that Mendoza's tentative negotiations would bear fruit, and commercial reprisals from other powers affected, notably France and England, might be expected (100). But there was no better plan, and Philip and the Council decided to adopt it early in February (101).

The proclamation, which was signed on 27th of that month, formally allowed the vessels of all nations to trade with Spain and her European possessions (102). The tariff was to apply to them all, but with certain concessions: vessels that visited Mediterranean ports were totally exempt, provided they carried consular letters of bona fides; Biscayan iron and steel were also exempt, as was all traffic between Spain and the loyal Low Countries. A shipmaster was also given the opportunity to return to Spain to redeem his 30% with letters that proved that he had discharged his cargo in the Low Countries (103). Not surprisingly, the author of the scheme was throughout alone in his belief that it was successful or even

(98) AGS E620/248; AGS E2023/101; Alcocer i 183.

(99) AGS E617/215; AGS E618/31.

(100) AGS E620/256.

(101) AGS E2636/135.

(102) For this purpose it was assumed that the English, Irish or Dutch merchants who might avail themselves of the new arrangements would be Spanish sympathizers.

(103) AGS E196/sf, AGS E2023/86. BN 2347/78.



moderately workable (104). The Dutch remained as ingenious as ever at finding loop-holes (105). Officials were not appointed in sufficient quantities and their honesty was by some felt not to be above reproach (106). Albert continued to issue a small number of licences to the Dutch (107). The international scene had been overcast, and at a time when Spain could ill afford it to be so: English and French reaction had been markedly hostile, and the latter had replied with a total embargo that was causing grave difficulties in Spain and the Low Countries (108). Worst of all, now that they had been admitted once more to Spanish ports, the Dutch were able to resume purchase of large quantities of salt, manifestly considering the 30% tariff a small price to pay (109). Forced along by English demands during the Treaty of London and the need to re-open trade with France, in the summer of 1604 the Spanish authorities decided to revoke the tariff (110). Ironically, the obvious step - the restoration of a complete embargo upon Dutch vessels - could not at once be taken: famine in Portugal and Andalucia could only be relieved by the Polish and Baltic grain brought in by the rebels (111). The revolt of the Netherlands indeed constituted a grave and far-reaching problem.

(104) AGS E2023/79; Alcocer i 365.

(105) AGS E622/165.

(106) AGS E622/195; AGS E2023/89.

(107) AGS E2023/79; Alcocer i 365.

(108) AGS E2024/83; Alcocer ii 40.

(109) AGS E623/23.

(110) qvi p. 214. ; AGS E2024/61; Alcocer ii 81.

(111) AGS E2024/76. The embargo was finally restored in December (AGS E2847/sf, document of 10th December, 1604).

### III. ACQUIESCENCE.

In the eyes of the world at large, France was Spain's main enemy: "it is at this day," noted Sir Thomas Overbury in 1609, "the greatest united force of Christendom ... the only entire body that makes head against the Spanish monarchy (1)." In various forms, the rivalry between the two powers was centuries-old, with its origins in the Franco-Imperial struggle for northern Italy in the Middle Ages and the turbulent relations between the Valois and the House of Burgundy in the fifteenth century. With the astonishing and rapid extension of Habsburg influence since the beginning of the sixteenth century, Spain had also inherited intensified French suspicions. Threatened by Habsburg lands to the south and west, and perpetually fearful that England would enter the opposite camp, France considered it imperative to break the strangle-hold that she felt one day could end her independent existence; and perhaps there was more than a little jealousy in her attitude towards a neighbour that, a century before, had been even less stable than herself and that now occupied first place amongst the world powers. Hence, French interference whenever possible in Germany, Flanders and Italy.

For the first half of his reign, however, Philip II had been comparatively free of preoccupations on this score. The Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis in 1559 had set the seal upon Habsburg success after many years of troublesome wars, and the perpetual state of civil unrest brought about by a succession of rois fainéants prevented the French from casting more than greedy eyes upon their neighbours' greatness. French hostility could only make itself felt by indirect means, and virtual alliances with the Turk, with England and with the Dutch rebels were not taken by Spain as sufficient reason for declaring war: Philip, for all his wealth, was already engaged

(1) Overbury 311, 314.

in combat with these three enemies. He therefore contented himself with paying his rival back in his own coin; his agents, foremost amongst them Bernadino de Mendoza, the ambassador in Paris, were hard at work fomenting discord (2). The death in 1584 of Henry III's brother and heir-presumptive, the Duke of Anjou, caused Philip to redouble his efforts. Whilst Anjou lived, he could expect the next king to be a rival, it was true: but he could always hope that Anjou would contain his envy or even seek to be on friendly terms with Spain. The same could not be said of the new heir-presumptive. Henry of Navarre was of strong character and considerable military experience; he was moreover a Huguenot. The threat that he posed to Spanish interests could not be disregarded. Philip, with his high sense of religious calling, could not view with equanimity the prospect of yet another Protestant monarch in Europe, especially one of so large a neighbouring country. Henry shared his religious allegiance with both Elizabeth of England and the rebel Dutch; and even if he had shewn himself willing to compromise, Philip could never have followed suit. It behoved the latter as the self-appointed guardian both of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis and of doctrinal purity to combat Henry's undoubted malevolence. In 1585, he therefore concluded the Treaty of Joinville with the Roman Catholic League in France, and began to make a serious contribution to the civil war there (3).

With the murder of Henry III and the accession of Henry IV in 1589, the danger became more acute. In order to combat it, and to solve the problem of France once for all, Philip announced that the true monarch of France was his daughter, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia. For Henry's claim was felt by many to be tenuous. As a descendant of the sixth son of S. Louis, he was cousin in the twenty-second degree to the previous king (4):

(2) Jensen, passim.

(3) ibid.

(4) Mousnier 91.

Isabella, on the other hand, possessed a respectable claim of her own as the heir of the Dukes of Brittany, and Spanish commentators were agreed that the Salic Law that forbade female succession to the throne was the vain invention of mediaeval French jurists (5). Above all, Philip, speaking for a large section of French opinion, asserted that Henry's Protestantism disqualified him out of hand. In this, he had support from the papacy, as he fully expected - "for there is an obvious difference between the dependability and service that His Holiness and the Holy See can expect from what is in our hands and from that which is in the hands of the French." (6) Neither Sixtus V in 1585 nor Gregory XIV in 1591 was prepared to tolerate a Most Christian King who did not recognize their spiritual jurisdiction and who would in all probability encourage large numbers of his subjects to follow his example, and their bulls issued in those years declared that Henry's title was ineligible (7).

Whilst these pontificates lasted, all was well. Philip could remain secure in the knowledge that political advantage and religious duty coincided exactly. His statement to the nuncio in May, 1596, although it not unnaturally laid a somewhat greater stress upon the higher rather than the lower motive, admirably expressed his attitude:

"His Majesty has always rejoiced in peace and has always kept it according to the service of God and of His holy catholic faith; he has never in the past occupied himself in anything that has not carried with it the obligation of defending either that faith or justice, and has kept peace or declared war with only this in mind; and he hopes, with God's help, to shew himself like-minded in the future."

(5) cf Salazar de Mendoza vol. II libro v., title v., section 1; AHN EL414, document of 21st July, 1595, section 49.

(6) AGS EL855/sf, royal despatch of 15th September, 1597.

(7) Mousnier 145-6; Mariéjol 326.

(Siempre SM ha holgado con la paz y conservádola en las partes y tiempos que ha concertado con el servicio de Dios y de su santa fe católica y nunca ha tenido por lo pasado a que no le hubiese llevado la obligación de la defensa de la misma fe o de la justicia midiendo la paz y la guerra con sólo este fin e intento y que en lo porvenir piensa con la ayuda de Dios parecido así mismo (8). )

But a new pope, Clement VIII, who succeeded to the tiara in 1592, was soon to be faced with a problem of the first order. On 25th July, 1593, Henry IV publicly abjured Protestantism and became a Roman Catholic, as he had done once before at the time of the S. Bartholemew massacres in 1572. In so doing, he encouraged all the latent Gallicanism of his subjects; for, in spite of papal prohibitions, the Parlement of Paris and large numbers of French clergy had not only recognized Henry as their lawful monarch, but had also had him absolved, crowned and anointed whilst still under the papal ban (9). When Henry sent his representatives to Rome to ask the Pope to confirm what had been done, Clement could hardly send them away (10). Admittedly, the fact that Henry was a relapsed heretic complicated matters, and the papal absolution that might otherwise have been readily granted was delayed considerably. But if Henry could give adequate guarantees of his resolve to persist in his new allegiance, Clement would find no fault. The papal aim had been to ensure that France was ruled by a Roman Catholic; and an opportunity to do so without further bloodshed had now presented itself. There was, moreover, an even more pressing consideration. A warning had come from France that, if the Pope withheld his approval, he could give up his authority in France for lost (11). Under such pressure, Clement had no choice; and on 17th September, 1595, he formally absolved the new French king.

From the first, Spain had urged the other side of the case. Henry, as a relapsed heretic, and an enemy of Spain, could not be credited with

(8) AGS E968/sf, document of 13th May, 1596.

(9) Mariéjol 379 seqq.

(10) Ossat i 248. Henry's appeal to the Pope is dated 18th August, 1593.

(11) Pastor xxiii 105.

sincerity; the Pope's energies would be better employed in sending troops, rather than letters of absolution, to France (12). When, despite all representations, Clement recognized Henry, Spain's disappointment was considerable. But still more considerable was her annoyance at the terms of the reconciliation. Henry had been forced to make few sacrifices: he had given no explicit promise to root out Protestantism from his realm; his heir-presumptive was to be the Protestant Condé, rather than the Leaguer Count of Soissons - which meant that the Pope had acquiesced to the very principle against which Philip II had reacted so violently, that a Huguenot could succeed to the throne of France; and finally, as though to add insult to injury, Henry was described in the papal documents as King of Navarre, a title which Philip already regarded as his own by virtue of a previous papal grant (13). It was hard to believe that the real state of affairs in France had not come to Clement's ears. When he appealed to Philip's zeal for the faith by suggesting a tri-partite attack upon the Turk, the Spanish ambassador, Sesa, could scarcely repress a scornful laugh (14). And when the latter complained that Henry since his absolution had continued to consort with Protestants at home and abroad, Clement had even suggested that a part of the blame might be Philip's, for desiring to continue a war which forced such compromises upon the French king (15). Papal attempts to bring about a reconciliation were therefore unwelcome, and even suspect; as Sesa pointed out, Clement had taken more thought for his own advantage than for truth and decency:

"blindness in this matter is considerable here; they cannot bear that the peace with France suffer any obstacle, for they think that with it events will be moved on and the Holy See better obeyed."

(12) AGS E968/sf, consulta of 8th March, 1595.

(13) AGS E966/sf, document of 7th December, 1595; AGS E968/sf, document of 12th January, 1596.

(14) AGS E967/sf, document of 14th May, 1596.

(15) *ibid.*

(Es grande la ceguedad que aquí pasa en esta materia no pudiendo sufrir que se dificulte la paz con Francia pareciéndoseles que con esto quedarán avanzadas las cosas y esta santa sede será mejor obedecida (16). )

The same notable lack of principle was increasingly obvious in most of the Leaguers, who had formerly been Philip's close allies. The Duke of Guise had surrendered late in 1594, and the decrees of Folembray in January, 1596, marked the defection of Mayenne, Nemours and Joyeuse (17). On every count, Spain could understandably feel that she had been betrayed by her best friends for the sake of a compromise with the powers of darkness. But the defection of the Pope provoked an important crisis of conscience in Spanish official circles. Throughout the war, Philip had chosen to stress the religious motives behind his intervention in France; and now that the papacy had convinced itself of Henry's sincerity, he could no longer be considered its temporal representative on this count. Admittedly, Philip had appeared more papist than the Pope on previous occasions, but never before in a matter of such gravity. His problem was obvious: ought he too to sacrifice principles to expediency? But in his case, more than principles were at stake. Having for so long regarded himself as the most powerful and, religiously speaking, the most faithful monarch in Europe, Philip found genuine difficulty in following the Pope's lead; for in sacrificing his principles, he would also have to sacrifice his pride. His gradual and painful realization that he would have to give way is at the root of the diplomacy of the last years of the reign.

Amongst the few factors that helped to smooth Philip's path towards peace was Henry IV's dire need to end the war. Not unnaturally, the new king greatly wished to avenge his country's honour by punishing the interfering neighbour who had trespassed upon French soil, and he felt that his every action would have to be consonant with a high sense of reputation and

(16) AGS E967/sf, document of 4th November, 1596.

(17) Mariéjol 391; CMH 668; Dumont V i 507, 510, 519

glory if he were to restore French fortunes to their former greatness (18). As a token of his new confidence, he had made his formal declaration of war against Philip early in 1595 (19), and at times he would speak grandiloquently of his military potential and of his subjects' resolve to carry on the fight:

"only respect for His Holiness urges me towards peace: for although my kingdom badly needs to rest after suffering so much for so long, my subjects and I are so used to the evils of war that we can still make as spirited a resistance as any of our neighbours. I have a just cause against a notorious usurper who uses the name of religion to cloak his usurpation."

(La seule considération de sa Sainteté me pousse à la paix; car encore que mon royaume ait tout besoin de repos après avoir tant et si longuement pâti toutesfois mes sujets et moi sommes si accoutûmés au mal de la guerre que nous y pouvons résister gaillardement encore, autant que nuls autres que nos voisins. Ma cause est juste contre un manifest usurpateur qui emploie le nom de la religion pour couvrir son usurpation (20). )

But though he might express his belief that Philip would receive in this world the just deserts of his wickedness, Henry could not pretend that he would be the agent. Economically and militarily, France had been badly mauled. Although fortune had of late smiled upon her armies, she could not continue the effort for much longer without suffering irreparable damage. Taxes, shortages and disruptions were pressing increasingly upon Henry's subjects. To his great inconvenience, Henry's victory at Amiens was immediately followed by the spontaneous disbanding of his army, which refused to fight without pay; on Friday evening, according to the King, he was attended by five thousand gentlemen: by mid-day on Saturday, by less than a tithe of that number - "la légèreté des français, c'est grande," he remarked ruefully (21). Moreover, a good many sections of French society, although they had no wish to fight for Spain, were not prepared to prolong

(18) Sully i 206.

(19) Dumont V i 512, 514.

(20) LM iv 883.

(21) Anquez 48-9.



unduly the struggle against her. The former Leaguers, the rentiers, the merchants - especially those who were financing Henry's operations - the principal towns, the parlements and, in general, all Roman Catholics were disposed to come to terms (22). The Huguenots, offended at the decree of Traversy of 1596, which restored property and full liberty to the Roman Catholic Church, had refused to fight (23). In official circles too, opinion was increasingly in favour of ending the war. In a memorandum presented to the King probably early in 1598, the President Jeannin stated the case cogently. Undoubtedly, Spain was weak: but France was in no fit state to take advantage of the fact. Unlike Philip II, Henry could not command credit on a vast scale; unlike Philip, he did not rule a relatively-undivided nation - the Edict of Nantes was wholly welcome to none, and the inter-provincial and inter-family rivalries that had come to the surface during the civil war could not be eradicated merely by the King's change of religion. Henry would be wise to profit by Philip's reported ill-health. Whilst the latter lived and controlled Spanish policy, there would be delays, inefficiencies and ill-judged parsimony: but if the war were to drag on until the succession of his son, Henry might be faced with an energetic and bellicose young monarch who could well tip the balance in Spain's favour. In Jeannin's view, there was no other course but to make peace, and as quickly as possible (24).

Unfortunately for Philip, Spain had similar problems, but on a still greater scale. Since the absolution of Henry IV, she had suffered a number of serious military setbacks. The already-nervous Duke of Mercoeur was being encouraged by the Pope to surrender Brittany to Henry, and Spain's only hope of retaining his loyalty was to provide the reinforcements that he badly needed (25). Another important ally was in severe difficulties:

(22) cf AGS E612/140

(23) Mousnier 126.

(24) Jeannin 669 seqq; the editors - in my view mistakenly - ascribe the document to 1595.

(25) AGS EK1599/43,55; AGS EK1600/63,67,68,80,117; AGS EK1601/54,59.

Charles Emmanuel of Savoy, who had for some time been suffering at the hands of the Huguenot general, Lesdiguières, was unable to pay his way. His subjects' patience was exhausted: unless he were to face a rebellion, he would have to gain a respite, financial or military. But Spain was unable to help either of them. Her forces in Brittany were in a desperate state; one of the commanders protested that his men were all dying of cold and hunger, and although a thousand new troops arrived in the summer of 1597, they were to prove insufficient (26). Not surprisingly, Mercoeur came to terms with Henry early in 1598 (27). The situation in Milan, the only source from which Charles Emmanuel could expect support, was no less serious. The Spanish commander, the Constable of Castile, was far from excitable: but he painted a grim picture of the conditions under which he had to serve the King:

"because of the course of nature and the accidents which have improved French fortunes and damaged our own, the dangers that I foresaw many months ago are coming too close. I have to tell Your Majesty that we can do less than ever about them unless you send help from your great reserves of power. The coffers of the Chamber of Milan are empty and charged with debts, and there is no help humanly to be expected from them; and Your Majesty's subjects are impoverished with ordinary taxes, extraordinary loans, lean years and - the heaviest burden of all - the continual billeting of raw soldiery."

(Por el curso de la naturaleza y por los accidentes en que franceses se han mejorado y enflaquecido nuestro partido se nos acercan demasiado los peligros que ha muchos meses que anteví y represento a VM con menos remedio que jamás tuvieron sino nos viene de la poderosa mano de VM pues de la camera de Milán no hay nada que esperar socorro humano según se halla exhausta y empeñada y pobres los súbditos de VM con las cargas ordinarias y anticipaciones extraordinarias y esterilidad de los años y los alojamientos continuos de soldadesca nueva que los consume más que otra cosa (28). )

(26) AGS EK1599/52; AGS EK1601/13.

(27) Mariéjol 406; AGS EK1601/91.

(28) AGS E1283/82.

In this ill-prepared state, the Constable expected to have to face Biron, who was threatening Bresse and Savoy; and great as were Charles Emmanuël's claims upon his father-in-law, Philip, they were not sufficient to warrant throwing into jeopardy Spain's most important possession in Italy. With great regret, Philip and his advisers were forced to abandon Savoy to her fate; and Charles Emmanuel concluded, with Spain's tacit approval, a truce with France in 1596 (29). The setbacks suffered by her allies were mirrored in Spain's own military difficulties. Her recent record was not one of unmitigated defeat: in 1596 alone, her troops took Calais, Ham, Guisnes and Amiens (30). But Marseilles defected to Henry IV in February, 1596, and Amiens was quickly lost once more (31). And whereas in May, 1596, Henry was able to renew his alliance with England and the United Provinces, Spain was now fighting alone. The Iberian Peninsula itself had been badly alarmed by the apparent first-fruits of the tri-partite agreement; the raid on Cadiz had admittedly not turned out as successfully as its organizers had hoped: but Spain could not afford to disregard the possibility that at some future date a joint venture of this type might prove only too effective.

Although his military and ideological positions were in doubt, Philip was not disposed to give in so easily. He continued to believe fervently in the justice of his cause, and shewed no signs of being in a hurry to come to terms. Nevertheless, he was not blind to the dangers that faced him; and he had made it plain to Albert, when he sent him to Flanders in 1595, that, provided the conditions were right, he would not object to listening to any French proposals for a truce. But he still believed that any such proposals

(29) AGS E1284/17: "presupuesto las dificultades o casi imposibilidades que hay de ayudarle hallándose todo tan agotado y consumido como está especialmente el estado de Milan de donde había de ser la principal y habiendo tanto a que acudir a otras partes aunque fuera conveniente dársela..." qvq CMH 417; AGS E1282/38,77,174; AGS E1283/173; AGS E1284/17,19.

(30) Mariéjol 407.

(31) AGS E1428/61

would be serpentine, and on one point he was adamant: the first move would have to be Henry's (32). Perhaps fortunately, this was to be the case. Through the agency of one Ronan, who claimed to be a staunch supporter of Philip but who clearly had significant contacts with the French authorities, the governor of S. Denis, de Vic, made known to Albert Henry's strong desire for peace or at least for a truce (33). Albert believed de Vic to be "a good Catholic", and was prepared to take the information seriously. Comforting himself with the thought that, after all, it had been the French who had spoken first, he sent Ronan back to France with a passport and the strong impression that the offer would not be rejected out of hand. Since Ronan's mission brought forth no definite proposals from either side, the two Flemish ministers, Richardot and Verreyken, met de Vic and one of Henry's secretaries of state at Boulogne in July or early August, 1596. There was still nothing official in the meeting: Richardot's ostensible reason for being in the area was that he was bound for Calais on some administrative matter and had turned aside to hear, informally and in private, what de Vic had to say (34). After some preliminary skirmishing about the desirability of avoiding damage to the harvest in the Calais region, the question of peace was raised. It quickly became apparent that the French would insist upon the return of the towns that Spain occupied; and with this clear sign of French intentions, the two Flemings returned to Brussels (35).

This was precisely what Philip II had wanted: an offer that might result in a truce that would, hopefully, include all the French battle areas (36). But almost at once his hand was forced. For now that the entire war-effort had been shifted to Spain's shoulders, the burden could no longer be supported. Expenses were enormous. A relation drawn up probably towards

(32) AHN E1414/sf, document of 21st July, 1595, section 54; AGS E968/sf, document of 12th July, 1596.

(33) AGS E611/68,83.

(34) AGS E611/114,121.

(35) AGS E611/121.

(36) AGS E2223/173,115.

the end of 1596 estimated that Spain would have to spend 11,034,945 ducats in the thirteen months between November, 1596 and December of the following year, a sum of which the greater part would be consumed by the war-effort. If, miraculously, all her resources were drawn upon to the full, an income of 11,590,000 ducats could be expected for the same period. In face, the normal annual income of the crown was considerably less, rising to only 4,133,000 ducats; and if the war continued, Philip could expect by the end of 1599 to have a total debt of some 25,858,275 ducats (37). There was only one course to adopt: as on three previous occasions, Philip was forced to repudiate his debts. On 11th November, 1596, secret orders were sent out to suspend payments to the merchants who were Philip's creditors, and an official proclamation followed nine days later (38). And although the author of an unofficial memorandum three months later was probably only guessing when he calculated the cost of the war as 300,000 ducats and the cost of a peace-treaty as only 20,000, the general import was undeniably correct: Spain could not afford to go on (39).

The bankruptcy therefore had a profound effect upon Spanish policy. With it vanished the second of the two bases of Philip's belief that he was the hammer of the ungodly and the upholder of the Habsburg world-order. The first had gone when Clement VIII had shewn that the papacy had a mind and policy of its own; and now neither Philip nor anyone else could continue to regard Spain's immense resources as sufficient for her needs, let alone inexhaustible. All the assumptions of Philip and his advisers were now shaken. For many years, they had given little thought to the possibility of defeat and had expected a constant advance towards the imposing of world peace. The final collapse of the grand policy was a cruel blow to their pride and self-confidence. The hateful course of compromise seemed

(37) AGS CJH 358/sf, document of November (?) 1596; qvs p. 30 *seqq.*

(38) AGS CJH 358/sf, document of 11th November, 1596; Ulloa 532.

(39) AGS EK1600/27, 28. cf. AGR PEA 197/38 for the state of the Flemish Treasury.

increasingly inevitable, and not only with Henry IV: although only a month before his declaration of bankruptcy Philip had repudiated any idea of including England and the United Provinces in any agreement, he now realized that there might be too many risks in remaining intransigent. The Council's words seem therefore rather poignant:

"the objective of wars is peace, always provided that proper conditions may be obtained; and so the door should not be shut on these discussions, the more so since three wars are being waged against declared enemies - France, England and the rebels - to say nothing of those who are believed secretly to be encouraging them."

(La paz es el fin de las guerras siempre que se pueda concluir con condiciones convenientes y así no se debe cerrar la puerta a estas pláticas especialmente siendo tres las guerras que se sustentan con franceses ingleses y rebeldes enemigos declarados sin los otros encubiertos que se cree dan fomento a éstos.)

Every expedient should be tried in order to separate the allies - transferring the entire business to papal hands seemed to be as good a means as any. But the principle had to be admitted (40). Whereas the Council had proposed only that a truce be arranged, however, Philip himself was prepared to go further still. With his policy crumbling about his ears, he ordered Albert to give the French to understand that a well-negotiated peace might well prove to be the first step towards some more permanent arrangement. If Philip could not continue to be a warrior of righteousness, at least the world should see that he knew another of his Christian duties to be to seek peace and ensue it (41).

Although the negotiations started through de Vic had come to nothing, a second attempt was proving more successful. A Flemish gentleman called La Bolvena had been sent to France on a private matter by the Count de la Fera. When passing through the French town of Guise, he was invited to dinner by

(40) AGS E2223/115; AGS E2855/sf, consulta of 13th November, 1596.

(41) AGS E2223/182: "dándoles a entender que esto puede abrir camino a lo principal y lo demás que fuere apropiado."

the governor, du Pêche, who later set him on his road as far as Soissons. On his return journey, La Bolvena received a midnight message to meet his friend the governor at Meaux. There he was told that Henry IV himself wished to see him; and an interview between the two took place in Rouen at three o'clock on the morning of 1st November. During the course of the next two days, there were further interviews, during the course of which it became clear that Henry, whilst protesting that he would stand by his English and Dutch allies, wished to conclude an honourable peace with Spain; this achieved, remarked his secretary, "the two kings could easily subjugate and punish their vassals." (42) And, not for the first nor the last time, the diplomatic chestnut of a crusade against the Turk was mentioned by the French. Albert did not feel able to disregard so signal a mark of good-will; and late in November, he sent La Bolvena back to Rouen to assure Henry of his joy at hearing so godly a suggestion as a crusade from the newly-converted French king. When the conditions for peace were mentioned, the French admittedly were once more clear that Spain should return the towns that she occupied; but on a more encouraging note, Villeroy himself told La Bolvena of Henry's sincere desire for peace (43). Hitherto, no record of these tentative negotiations had been made. In order to rectify this, Albert ordered Richardot to write unofficially to Villeroy, his opposite number in France, to suggest that matters of such importance ought to be dealt with by men of greater standing than was La Bolvena (44). Villeroy had no choice but to reply; and four letters, all of them expressing a desire for peace amongst Christians but couched in the most general of terms, were exchanged between 18th December, 1596, and 9th February, 1597 (45).

(42) AGS E611/206,204.

(43) AGS E611/219: "que el rey con todo su corazón desea la paz y sobre todo para que pueda emplear sus armas contra el Turco y siente en extremo la rota de los cristianos."

(44) AGS E611/218.

(45) AGS E613/38,39.

The problem of how to begin effective negotiations remained. Philip refused to take the initiative, and Henry had not gone far enough. What might have been a serious impasse was eventually resolved by the continued efforts of the Pope. From the first, Clement had urged his two wayward sons to make up their differences, and with some measure of success. Even before Philip's declaration of bankruptcy, his ambassador in Rome had conscientiously followed orders to shew himself open to the Pope's exhortations. Moreover, for all the favour that he had shewn to him, Clement was no devoted partisan of Henry IV (46). The latter's dalliance with Huguenot and Gallican alike was frowned upon in Rome; and no pope could be blind to the advantages of keeping Spain's friendship - for apart from her doctrinal purity, Spain's lands surrounded the papal states. Clement therefore did his best to sweeten Spain's bitterness after Henry's absolution. He spoke secretly of Spain's important role as a counterweight to France, a piece of flattery that Philip welcomed (47). He suggested that, if Philip abandoned on his daughter's behalf all claims to the duchy of Brittany and the throne of France, Henry might be persuaded to help in placing Isabella on the English throne (48). Moreover, he resisted Henry's wish to have the talks transferred to Rome, purely from a desire to further Spain's interests. He knew well that certain factions in the curia and the city could do their utmost to disrupt the negotiations, and was especially suspicious of Venice and Tuscany, both allies of France and enemies of Spain, and with whom he had cause of his own for complaint (49). Although Henry was claiming that, if talks were held in Rome, he would find it easier to rid himself of his Protestant allies, Clement seems to have resisted the temptation to take up the point. If, in the last analysis, Philip decided to make peace with England and the United Provinces, he had better do so elsewhere: a compromise

(46) cf Ossat iii letter 128.

(47) AGS E967/sf, document of 16th May, 1596; AGS E969/sf, document of 16th March, 1597.

(48) AGS E967/sf, document of 16th May, 1596; qvi p. 156 seqq.

(49) CMH 397.



with Protestants, although it might be essential for Spain, could scarcely take place under the papal aegis. For Spain's convenience, therefore, Clement decided to send a legate northwards in order to set negotiations in motion; and as a further token of his wish to reassure Philip, he chose Frà Bonaventura Secusi di Caltagirone, the General of the Franciscan Order and one of the King's south Italian vassals (50).

Philip therefore had especial cause to be grateful for Clement's intervention. He could come to terms with Henry with a far clearer conscience. His opponent had made the first moves, and the Pope, for whose religious interests Philip claimed to be fighting, had smoothed the path considerably. Admittedly, the negotiations were to take place on French soil at Vervins, whereas in 1559 the Habsburgs had played the gracious host at Cateau-Cambrésis. But because the talks were in fact to take place at the house of Clement's second legate, the Cardinal Aldobrandino, there were no embarrassing and unpleasant wrangles about precedence, such as were to mar the meetings with the English envoys at Boulogne in 1600 (51). Since, therefore, all the Pope's suggestions now seemed in keeping with Philip's sense of decorum, the latter decided to commit matters into the hands of his representatives; and, at Albert's request, in August, 1597, he issued powers to enable his nephew to conduct negotiations with the French (52).

This was indeed fortunate, for the military situation in the north was increasingly unfavourable. Amiens fell to Henry on 25th September, and a relief expedition destined for Brittany was frustrated by storms about the same time. Above all, Spain's principal military base, the Low Countries,

(50) AGS E969/sf, documents of 4th and 24th February, 1597.

(51) cf Winwood i, document of 14/24th May, 1600; AGR PEA 429, frontispiece.

(52) AGS E969/sf, document of 31st March, 1597; AGS E614/25; AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/234; AGS E2864/63, 64.

was daily becoming weaker. The Flemish authorities knew even better than their Spanish masters that the war could not be continued without running the gravest of risks. It was feared that the populace, exasperated by years of hardship, expense and bloodshed, would join forces with their Dutch neighbours and further complicate matters by beginning a civil war of their own (53). Albert constantly begged for more troops and supplies. In order to keep the war on the French and the Dutch fronts alive, he needed 30,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, besides the men in the garrisons. In the autumn of 1597, he was receiving 350,900 escudos each month, but was forced to ask for another 15,000 infantry and an extra 100,000 escudos a-month with which to pay them (54). His credit was exhausted and his expenses constantly mounting. To the horror of Philip and his advisers, he expected Spain to solve his problems:

"in all the despatches that are sent from here, Your Majesty is told of the difficulties in which I find myself and how they increase daily, for it is so long since fresh resources came from Spain. The 600,000 escudos are now completely spent, and I find myself penniless, with neither credit nor the means of obtaining it, and with heavier obligations than ever."

(En todos los despachos que de aquí van representando a VM la necesidad con que me hallo y como está creciendo cada día más habiendo tanto tiempo que no viene de España el recaudo que sería menester ... Se han acabado de conservar los 600,000 escudos sin hallarse con un real ni crédito ni forma ninguna de donde sacarla y con mayores obligaciones que nunca.)

Two days after the arrival of this alarming news, the councillors of state made their inevitable pronouncement; if there had been any lingering doubts about treating with the French, they were now dispelled for good.

"In the present situation of waging open war with three such powerful enemies as the French, the English and the rebels, and with the

(53) AGS E615/112; cf. report of the Flemish Treasury in January, 1596: AGR PEA 197/38.

(54) AGS E614/64,65.

Treasury so exhausted, there can be no doubt that the best thing is to make peace with all of them, or simply with the French, so that we may draw breath and re-organize for the future."

(El estado presente de tener guerra abierta con tres enemigos tan poderosos como son franceses, ingleses y rebeldes y la hacienda tan exhausta como se sabe no se puede dudar que lo más conveniente es hacer una paz o con todos o con franceses para tomar aliento y reformar para adelante (55). )

From the councillors' language even at a particularly dark hour, it is plain that Spain still had not given up. The conditions of peace with France would not only have to safeguard the aims for which Philip had waged the war, but also put Spain in a position from which to protect them in the future. The new assumption was that Spain would live to fight another day. It was this that reconciled Philip and his advisers to their most important concession: the religious question, which at first had been so much emphasized, was quietly allowed to drop. The force of Clement's argument that, if he himself entertained no scruples on this score, neither should Spain, was gradually acknowledged (56). Curiously, the King himself made the vital decision. On 15th March, 1597, the Council thought that the cause of religion - "the primary aim" - would be best served by opening negotiations:

"and even if all that we obtain from peace is that we are thus able to stir up the Catholics of France as they promise, and achieve for those in England liberty of conscience and a new way of life so that they may evangelize and extend their influence there, this will be of obvious importance for the good of Christendom."

(Y cuando no se saque otro fruto de la paz general que por su medio se cuajare que alentar a los católicos de Francia por este medio como ellos se prometen y granjear a los de Inglaterra libertad de conciencia para que se predique el evangelio allí y vivan los católicos de manera que puedan extenderse más será de la importancia que se deja considerar para el bien de la Christiandad (57). )

(55) AGS E614/68; E2855/sf, consulta of 17th December, 1597.

(56) AGS E967/sf, document of 14th May, 1596.

(57) AGS E2855/sf, consulta of 15th March, 1597.

Philip, on the other hand, did not indulge in fond hopes when on the following day he wrote to Sesa in Rome. He was fully alive to the need to present a stern face to the world, and told his ambassador to act in such a way as not to appear enthusiastic either for peace or war. He still had some confidence - "thank God, there is no wavering here" - and still stressed that a sense of religious duty permeated all his dealings (58). Henry IV's dealings with the Huguenots were as objectionable as ever, and Sesa was ordered to tell the Pope once more all the scandalous details and to urge him to obtain the total exclusion of Protestants from important civil office. But in the last resort, Philip was not prepared to lose all chance of peace simply because of the unsatisfactory state of Roman Catholicism in France. If Sesa could not carry his point, he was not to be intransigent (59). Whether at Rome or in the north, the Pope and his representatives, not the Spaniards, should appear to be the insistent guardians of the faith: it was their special duty, and if their efforts failed it was proper that theirs should be the special blame (60). Philip had done his duty. Now that he was bowed down under the weight of bankruptcy and defeat, he chose to hand on the far-spent torch to the Pope, who had been clamouring for it over the past eighteen months. If Clement was burnt, the fault would not be Philip's. Thereafter, religion fades from the diplomatic picture. It was not mentioned in Albert's list of peace proposals, drawn up in June, 1597, and the omission was not supplied by the King (61).

A similar fate met the Infanta's claim to Brittany. Philip continued to have no respect for "the so-called Salic Law" and claimed that even the French knew that Isabella's claim was just (62). But the claim was obviously

(58) AGS E969/sf, document of 16th March, 1597: "les mostréis cómo la guerra se ha hecho por puro celo y obligación de religión y que la paz se aceptará cuando fuere con condiciones convenientes a la misma religión y al bien público y al particular de mis cosas."

(59) *ibid.* Philip's attitude towards the religious situation in England and the United Provinces, however, remained unchanged.

(60) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/239.

(61) AGS E613/93; AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/231.

(62) AGS E969/sf, royal despatch of 16th March, 1597.

now impossible. Papal recognition was essential and, since Henry's absolution, out of the question. Once more, as we have seen, Clement strove to find a solution. To try to gain Brittany alone for the Infanta would be to court disaster by giving a handle to the Gallicans. The best way of retaining the friendship of both sides was to find them a common enemy; and this Clement did by suggesting to Sesa that, if Spain were to relinquish all claims to Brittany and the French throne, the French might be persuaded to assist in the winning of England for Isabella (63). The idea had a certain success. Philip was not blind to the disadvantages of continuing the fight for Brittany, for even the Duke of Mercoeur's help could no longer be depended upon. The English crown was an acceptable alternative (64). Perhaps Clement could remind the French of their long-standing enmity with the English and in this way encourage them to turn against their former allies; for the English had no real love for their near neighbours and, in Philip's view, wished to see the two great monarchies exhaust themselves by their quarrels (65). Even so, Philip can have had little hope that the plan would succeed. It was inconceivable that Henry, who had distrusted him for so long, would help him to win a prize far richer than the duchy of Brittany. The Pope's suggestion therefore provided nothing more than a seemly reason for giving way. And so nothing more was said of the Infanta's claim, except when it was dispiritedly used as a diplomatic counter to French demands (66). Oblivion, too, was the lot that befel the Leaguer allies whom Philip had wished to be co-signatories to a treaty with Henry. His representations fell on deaf ears. Henry alleged that he meant Mercoeur and the rest no harm, but they would receive their King's benevolence as penitent subjects or not at all (67). Mercoeur's subsequent surrender, using to the full the good offices of his sister, the Queen Mother, therefore

(63) AGS E967/sf, document of 16th May, 1596.

(64) qvi p 156 seqq.

(65) AGS E969/sf, document of 16th March, 1597.

(66) *ibid.*

(67) AGS E615/107; IM iv 902; Bellièvre & Sillery i 1.

came as something of a relief to Spain (68).

Clement's hope that Henry might help Philip to win England was the more vain because of Henry's constant insistence that his English and Dutch allies be included in the treaty. From first to last he was firm on this point (69). Apart from any motives of gratitude, common prudence and sensitivity to the Huguenots' wishes warned him against cutting himself off from valuable reinforcements. He therefore held to the position that he had taken up during the first tentative meetings at Boulogne and Rouen: all three allies were to take part in the negotiations (70). At first, Philip had been equally insistent that he would not agree. Anything that was to Henry's advantage - as, clearly, Henry believed this to be - could not be to Spain's. Neither Elizabeth nor the Dutch had abandoned their Protestantism after Henry's example, and the latter's conversion was for Philip one of the main factors that had reconciled him to making peace. English vessels had just sacked Cadiz; Elizabeth's war against Spain's Roman Catholic sympathizers in Ireland went on apace; and the Dutch rebels shewed not the least sign of penitence. Even after the bankruptcy of 1596, Philip still entertained hopes of invading England, Ireland and the United Provinces; the war against treacherous subjects and, to a lesser extent, against the Protestant Jezebel, was still a thing to be pursued. At first, indeed, he opposed the idea even of a truce with the others (71). But slowly, as we have seen, he was forced to change his mind. Three powerful enemies were too many for him; and unless he agreed to Henry's condition, peace on even one front would be impossible. Philip was forced to back down.

Unpalatable as it was to make peace with Henry IV, it was doubly so to do so with the English and the Dutch. Under what form, then, ought agreement to be reached? The Council of State favoured a single treaty with all

(68) AGS EK1601/91; AGS E970/sf, document of 26th April, 1598; Dumont V i 542.

(69) Bellièvre & Sillery i l.

(70) AGS E611/222.

(71) qvi p. 178; AGS E2223/115.

three allies. In their view, if for any reason one of them refused to come to terms, Spain would have to continue the war whilst two of her opponents regained their strength and, meanwhile, sent secret help to the third. Philip was less willing to compromise. He had given way once and had no wish to do so again. There was still a chance that Henry might be persuaded to abandon his allies, and Philip intended to exploit it to the full. Sesa was therefore under orders to sow the seeds of dissension amongst the allies by referring, as we have seen, to the traditional Anglo-French rivalry (72). Moreover, Philip was not ready to forget his self-imposed duty towards the Roman Catholic minorities in England and the United Provinces. Before any agreement could be reached, the English would have to be clear that persecution of the recusants must cease, and the Dutch that, having returned to their due obedience, though their Protestantism would be tolerated for a time, it would be as an exceptional concession (73). If peace with the Protestant powers became inevitable, Philip envisaged three treaties, not one. Perhaps this would bring with it the disadvantages foreseen by the Council: but Philip was more concerned to split up the alliance than to make more certain the hope of peace, and he still had not abandoned his old idea of bringing about a strengthening of the Roman Catholic interest in Europe. And if, in the very last resort, Spain were forced to make only one treaty with all three, there should be included a clause that bound all the signatories to declare war upon any of their number who might break the peace in the future (74).

At times, Philip's hope of splitting the alliance seemed likely to succeed. None of the allies was at any time entirely satisfied with the aims and conduct of the others, and in the autumn of 1597 came the welcome news from the Pope that relations between Henry and Elizabeth had recently

(72) AGS E969/sf, document of 16th March, 1597.

(73) *ibid.*

(74) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/239.

been deteriorating (75). Nevertheless, Henry did not fail to make considerable efforts on his allies' behalf. In the very first meeting of the two sides at Vervins, on 24th February, 1598, his representatives insisted that a courier be sent to Madrid to obtain powers that explicitly authorized treaty with the English and the Dutch (76). Before this loyalty, Philip and his advisers had to bow. But this was their only concession. The terms upon which the Habsburg delegates were empowered to treat with England and the Dutch were trenchant and unconciliatory. They could be admitted only under separate treaties; the English would have to make satisfactory arrangements for the toleration of Roman Catholicism; the Dutch would have to return to their due obedience. Once more, Philip raised aloft the banner of the faith: if the talks with Henry's friends had to be broken off, the delegates were ordered to do so in the name of religion (77).

In the end, Philip and Henry were to make peace without the others. For all the latter's efforts, England and the United Provinces shewed no eagerness to join in the discussions. Henry was therefore reduced to asking on their behalf for a truce, first for a year, then for four months and then for three, during which time they could decide what to do (78). Albert, acting on his uncle's behalf, saw no objection to granting the concession to England. But the Dutch were a different case: contumacious rebels, they were also attempting at every turn to disrupt the negotiations. Only as the result of the repeated intervention of the papal representatives, Aldobrandino and Caltagirone, and because of the need to ensure France's continued participation, did Albert finally give the Dutch a favour they neither desired nor deserved. A truce of two months was finally granted to both allies, to take effect from the day of the signing of the final Franco-Spanish treaty, six months' grace in which to decide whether or not to open talks with Spain,

(75) Birch 99; AGS E969/sf, document of 19th September, 1597.

(76) AGS E615/107. cf Henry's great deference towards the English representatives: LM iv 917.

(77) AGS E2855/sf, consulta of 14th March, 1598; AGS E2864/97; AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/4.

(78) Bellièvre & Sillery i 1; AGS E615/106, 92.



and a month's delay in the publication of the treaty (79). Henry could no longer afford to bear with the bellicosity of the Dutch nor the procrastination of the English. The terms of his agreement with them in 1596 had bound him to act in concert with them, but not at the price of his own ruin. When it came to the point, Henry fully realized that peace was as essential to him as it was to his rival. If England and the United Provinces chose to disregard an opportunity to end the wearisome and expensive struggle and put their forces in order for any subsequent trial of strength, it was regrettable: but his duty was to France (80).

Philip's final concession touched the matter about which, next to religion, he felt most strongly. For although he made greater public play of his zeal for religion and his desire to have his rights respected, in practice he was more determined to keep certain captures that his forces had made in France: "under no circumstances must we give way in the matter of the forts" (81). This was not to say that, at bottom, Philip was a complete hypocrite, for his true motives remained as they had always been. The fact that he had been obliged to come to terms with Henry IV did not betoken a change of heart; he could never trust his rival, whose sincerity he profoundly doubted and whom he expected to renew hostilities when it suited him - "with the same greatness and resources as past kings of France", as one of his ministers grimly observed (82). For all his military setbacks, Philip still had several cards to play. Not all his captures, of course, were invaluable. Amiens was too far into French territory to be of real use as a future bridgehead, and even before its loss, Philip had decided to use it as a bargaining-counter (83). Durlan and Ardres, though allegedly forming part of the ancient patrimony of the counts of Flanders, whose heir

(79) AGS E615/92, 112, 113.

(80) LM iv 970: "mon peuple est mangé, mes deniers sont consommés...."

(81) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/239.

(82) AGS E611/138.

(83) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/200, 217.

was Philip, might be sacrificed; La Chapelle and Châtelet, which had always been French, even more so (84). But Calais was a vitally-important deep-water port that commanded the English Channel and would be of incalculable value in any future attempt against any of the three allies. With far greater reluctance, therefore, Philip agreed to its possible evacuation, but only on condition that the fortifications made there by his troops be dismantled (84<sup>a</sup>).

Those who were close to the battle-fronts, however, proved not to be of so strong a mind. Albert and his envoys to the talks - Richardot, Verreyken and Juan Bautista de Tasis, a former ambassador to France - wished to extract as much profit from the situation as they could. But the knowledge that peace was vitally necessary in Flanders weighed heavily upon them. Albert saw at once that, since the French were obstinate in their demand for the return of Calais, to follow his uncle's original orders would be to throw up the entire negotiation for the sake of a single town, and one which, moreover, he and his forces could barely defend. With considerable reluctance, he resigned himself to the inevitable, and told his envoys that they might surrender Calais if they had to:

"our position is now so greatly altered from what it was before that its direness has forced me to agree to the restitution - a decision made very much against my will and one that will not bring with it the advantages that we otherwise might have expected."

(Las cosas están tan troncadas y diferentes de entonces en la hora presente que el ruin estado de ellas me ha obligado a resolverme en conceder la dicha restitución, cosa tan fuera de mi voluntad y de las ventajas que en otro tiempo se podrían pretender. (85) )

(84) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/200,202,217; AGS E613/93.

(84<sup>a</sup>) AGR PEA 429/140.

(85) AGS E615/59. cf. the delegates' letter to Albert on 2nd March: "ce de Calais est bien plus difficile à digérer, pour ce qu'à Madrid ils peignent sur des papiers blancs ce que nous voudrions autant qu'eux, mais nous les souhaitons ici afin d'apprendre avec nous à vouloir ce que l'on peut et non pouvoir ce que l'on veut." [AGR PEA 429/147.] Albert's sympathetic reply is dated 14th March [AGR PEA 429/159.]

Within the month, his action was justified: shortage of supplies and considerable arrears of pay had brought about the mutiny of the garrison. By the middle of February, Ardres and Châtelet had been lost in the same way (86).

The principal objects to agreement removed, the negotiations at Vervins were skilfully guided to their close by Aldobrandino, and on 2nd May, 1598, the final treaty was signed (87). The unexciting nature of the terms was a token of Spain's failure. Admittedly, there had been minor successes. Although the Breton fortress of Blavet was to be evacuated, like the duchy itself, the Spaniards were first to dismantle it, a concession that had not been allowed to either side in 1559. Cambrai was to continue under Spanish rule. The vexed question of the ownership of the Italian marquisate of Saluzzo was, with the consent of Henry IV and Charles Emmanuel of Savoy, referred to papal arbitration. But this was little to shew for nine years' war. For all her efforts and her immense expenditure, Spain had won no more than the territorial limits decided by the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, and she had finally been obliged to recognize Henry IV as the lawful king of France. The former failure in particular haunted the consciences of the three Habsburg delegates, as their lame justification for not retaining Calais shews. The fact that, in 1559, Henry II had given up more than Philip II was explained by the claim that "we had not managed to capture as much as they had"; and the delegates also stressed the need to defer to the Pope's wish to launch a Crusade, for which purpose peace between the two kingdoms was vital (88). They could see the prospect of better days ahead: the Treasury could regain its strength; the Dutch rebels might well come to terms with the new Flemish sovereigns, Albert and Isabella; perhaps, too,

(86) LM iv 902; AGS E615/63.

(87) Aldobrandino's tact and acumen, without which the negotiation would have been greatly complicated, earned him the praise of both sides: AGS E615/112; LM iv 985.

(88) AGS E615/112; AHN E2776/10; Dumont V i 561.

Elizabeth would decide to open talks. Nevertheless, such pious speculations could not alter the fact that Spain had lost the war.

France was overjoyed with the treaty (89). On the one hand, she had made no concessions that might injure national pride, and on the other the former Leaguers had no reason to complain that Philip had been subjected to unduly harsh terms. A Spanish observer reported in the summer of 1598 that both court and country shewed "extraordinary contentment at seeing themselves in peace with Your Majesty" (90). In Spain, the reaction was otherwise. A number of prominent men thought the treaty a scandal, and there was no public demonstration of joy when news of the agreement came through (91). Only Philip seems to have shewn much satisfaction. In the throes of what was to prove his last and supremely painful illness, he badly wanted to leave his son an inheritance that was not still torn by war on every side. Moreover, he expected a good deal from his decision to cede the Low Countries to his daughter and her fiancé (92). For him, the treaty was a necessary halt along the way towards the final victory of Roman Catholic Christendom: he did not expect Henry to be a faithful keeper of his promises, and especially of the nebulous clause that prohibited each side from aiding the rebels of the other, and he ordered Albert not to relax his vigilance along the borders with France. But he was in no fit state to complain of what had been agreed:

"I have studied all the details, and am most satisfied to see that you have brought to its conclusion this most weighty and important negotiation, from which (if the French are more scrupulous in the observation than is their wont) we may expect much honour for Our Lord

(89) For Henry IV's reaction, v Bellièvre & Sillery ii 333.

(90) AGS EK1602/19.

(91) cf CSPV ix 711.

(92) qvs p. 42 seqq.

and the good and peace of Christendom. As for the clauses and conditions of the peace, I am sure that you did what you could to improve them."

(Queda entendido todo muy particularmente y yo con la satisfacción que es razón de ver acabado por vuestra mano un negocio de tanto peso e importancia y de que (si franceses guardan mejor que suelen lo asentado) se espera mucho servicio de nuestro Señor y bien y quietud de la Cristiandad ... Quanto a las capitulaciones y condiciones de esta paz creo que se hizo lo posible para mejorarlas (93). )

He would have to leave the consummation of his policy to his son.

(93) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/152.

#### IV. PEACE IN THE BALANCE.

As long as Flanders remained the lynch-pin of Spanish foreign policy, Italy was to be an area of immense strategic importance. Without the guarantee of Spanish pre-eminence there, the war-effort in the north could not long be sustained. Not only was it one of the main sources of troops: the great difficulties of safely transporting soldiers and supplies across the Bay of Biscay and through the enemy-dominated English Channel forced Spain to depend upon a quieter route across the Mediterranean and overland to Flanders. Having disembarked in Genoa, troops would make their way through the Milanese by one of two main routes to Lorraine and thence to the Low Countries: through the Tyrol and Alsace, or through Savoy and the Franche-Comté. The former had considerable drawbacks: the princes of Germany were fearful enough of the Habsburgs, and the constant passage of large numbers of troops through their midst would have been enough to cause a grave crisis in the Empire (1). It was the latter route that in our period was the more popular; devised apparently by Philip II himself in 1565-1566, and generally known as the "Spanish Road", it had the advantage of keeping to lands that were either in Spain's possession or under her direct influence (2). The France<sup>h</sup>-Comté, which formed part of the historic lands of the duchy of Burgundy, had in the reign of Philip II gradually lost much of its independent character and was now ruled directly from Brussels; it was, moreover, traditionally neutral, and had been the subject of a separate agreement between France and Spain as early as 1596 (3). The preceding stage of the Spanish Road, however, was an independent buffer-state that had for some time been in close alliance with the Habsburgs. The architect of the new Savoyard duchy, the Duke Emmanuel Philibert, had re-established

(1) Mendoza 400.

(2) Parker, figure on p. 51; 59.

(3) Febvre; AGS E611/180,181; Dumont V i 527.

his country's position at the battle of S. Quentin in 1557, in coalition with Spain and the Empire. And although his heir, Charles Emmanuel, was the son of a French mother, he too was eager to maintain good relations with Spain, marrying in 1585 the Infanta Catherine Michaela. Possessing therefore the two great advantages of being Philip II's son-in-law and the ruler of a strategically-placed state, Charles Emmanuel expected a good deal of Spanish support (4).

Regrettably for Spain, the burden of the alliance was to prove heavy indeed. For Charles Emmanuel, an abnormally-ambitious man, badly wanted to complete his father's work of restoring the fortunes of his house by regaining the marquisate of Saluzzo, which lay on his south-western border. The last marquess had died in 1548; and although until that time it had been uncertain whether Saluzzo should be regarded as a French, a Savoyard or an imperial fief, Francis I took possession of it (5). No mention of it was made in the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, and Henry II and his sons succeeded unopposed to a crown augmented by the new lands. Emmanuel Philibert had intrigued hard to gain the cession of Saluzzo to Savoy, but by his death in 1580 had achieved nothing. Charles Emmanuel, however, chafed at the delay; and, profiting by the breakdown of French royal authority and the venality of the governor and his lieutenant, moved in with his troops late in September, 1588. But it was soon apparent that the annexation of Saluzzo was to be "the first and last substantial success" of Charles Emmanuel's adventurous reign (6). Henry IV's abjuration of Protestantism and the increased support that it won him made of him a far more formidable enemy than had been the last of the Valois. By February, 1594, Charles Emmanuel's military position had taken a marked turn for the worse. Threatened by Lesdiguières' troops, the Duke's only hope of safety lay in Spanish aid: his subjects were weary

(4) CMH 399 seqq.

(5) Cano Saluzzo 10.

(6) CMH 415.

of the war-taxation that he had imposed and seemed likely to break into rebellion if it were prolonged (7). But Spanish aid was not forthcoming. At the best of times, Philip had only with difficulty manned his various battle-fronts, and now, faced with a French king whose popularity at home and military successes abroad were simultaneously increasing, he found it doubly hard to spare resources. Painfully aware of this, in September, 1596, he directed his ambassador in Savoy to tell the Duke that he approved of the truce that had just been arranged with Lesdiguières, and contented himself with warning him against the undoubtedly malign intentions of France (8). As the months went by, the possibility of sending help to Savoy became fainter. In April, 1597, the Council of State had to speak of the "difficulties or near-impossibility" of intervening on Charles Emmanuel's behalf; and by July, the Constable of Castile in Milan could see only disaster ahead (9).

A lasting agreement between Henry and Charles Emmanuel, however, was not easily reached. From the outset, the former enunciated demands for considerable re-adjustment of boundaries. Not only did he require the surrender of the three important fortresses of Castel Delfino and Demonte in the highlands, and Centallo in the plain beyond; he also insisted upon the return of Saluzzo or the granting of adequate compensation (10). He wanted more than the mere recognition of French suzerainty: the Constable thought that, under the circumstances, Spain could have tolerated this. He stipulated the presence of French garrisons and governors - "which will mean little less than restoring everything, unless the French are more honourable and faithful than is their wont" (11). With considerable relief, therefore, the Spanish authorities learned that Charles Emmanuel had managed

(7) AGS E1282/38; AGS E1283/173.

(8) AGS E1282/174.

(9) AGS E1284/17; AGS E1283/43.

(10) AGS E1282/77.

(11) AGS E1280/129.



to have the dispute referred to the arbitration of the Pope. For, although under other circumstances a war in the north of Italy would have been welcomed as a means of reducing the pressure upon the Archduke Albert in the main theatre of the conflict, Spain could not at that moment find the necessary forces; and, important as Savoy was, Spain felt under no obligation to disregard her other interests. The new development seemed promising. If Sesa stressed to the Pope the strategic advantages to be gained by taking Savoy's part, and the need to protect Italy from the many Huguenot troops who would otherwise flood into the area, a satisfactory solution might be achieved (12). The Pope took no action in the matter during the period up to and including the Treaty of Vervins; but now that relations with France had been resumed, Charles Emmanuel sent the Marquess of Lulino to the talks as his representative, and clause twenty-six ended hostilities between the two countries and formally referred the settlement of outstanding differences to Clement (13).

In fact, the signing of the treaty was no more than the postponement of an inevitable conflict. Charles Emmanuel's first wish was still to see his state large and powerful; he did not intend to accede to French demands for large tracts of his land, and expected Spain to lend him support. But Henry was equally determined. Since the Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis, French influence in northern Italy had been in decline. In the winter of 1574-1575, the Savoyard fortresses that had been retained after 1559 were evacuated, and after the loss of Saluzzo in 1588, France found herself pushed to the west of the Alps (14). This could not be allowed to go unavenged. Throughout the sixteenth century, northern Italy had been one of the most vulnerable points in the Habsburg empire. Milan was, for the Council of State, "the key to all Italy" and a military powerhouse of the first importance (15).

(12) AGS E1284/32.

(13) AHN E2776/10; AGS E615/113.

(14) CMH 400 seqq.

(15) AGS E1288/105.

To threaten Milan would in a very real sense threaten the Spanish empire, both in Flanders and in the rest of Italy. Moreover, prestige was important; as the President Jeannin pointed out to Henry, unless he took a firm line with Savoy, "the already current opinion that this kingdom was regaining its ancient greatness by Your Majesty's wise and successful conduct will diminish." The King had therefore two alternatives: either he could accept adequate compensation from Savoy, or he could insist upon the return of Saluzzo. The former course had much to be said for it: Henry would be less likely to have to go to war once more, and he would have an opportunity to choose territory that would better round-off his south-eastern frontier. But Saluzzo had the greater appeal:

"it is a means of going down into Italy without risk, and the only means of keeping the good-will of Your Majesty's friends there and of checking the ambitious schemes of those princes whose greatness could be prejudicial to this country ... The loss of this small state, on the other hand, will give them to understand that we are utterly abandoning our interest in Italian affairs, that our friends ought to expect nothing of us and that Your Majesty's enemies or rivals have nothing to fear."

(C'est une entrée pour descendre dans l'Italie sans péril, seul moyen pour y maintenir vos amis en faveur et bienveillance envers nous, empêcher les desseins ambitieux des princes dont la grandeur peut être suspecte à cet état ... au lieu que la perte de ce petit état leur fera connaître que nous abandonnons du tout le soin des affaires d'Italie, que nos amis n'en doivent plus rien espérer, ni vos ennemis ou émulateurs rien craindre (16). )

As Jeannin pointed out, despite her lack of territory in Italy, France was not without friends there, nor Spain without enemies. The most powerful, though not the most active, was Venice. The constant depredations made upon Venetian shipping by privateers from Naples and Sicily soured relations with Spain. The two viceroys, the Duke of Maqueda in Sicily and the Count of

Lemos in Naples, lined their pockets with the spoil; and although in 1602 they were to receive Philip III's command to desist, between them in the following year they captured twelve great ships, and were causing an estimated annual loss of eight million ducats to the Venetians (17). Venice could therefore be depended upon to view French schemes with favour; indeed, it was to France that the Doge and Senate turned for mercenary troops to help them against the Uscocks late in 1599 (18). However, though in the words of one writer, "Venice was the buckler of Italian independence," she was in no way the sword (19). Her main interest was commerce, and for all her grievances against Spain, she did not wish to go to war (20). France found a more eager ally in Florence. The Grand Duke Ferdinand was believed in Spain to be the prime mover of the anti-Habsburg feeling in Italy. Flanked by the papal states, the Spanish client dukedoms of Parma and Modena, and Genoa, the financial nerve-centre of the Spanish empire, Ferdinand could not afford to hold aloof from the great powers. Since Spain had refused to grant him the investiture of Siena, he turned to France; and a close alliance between the two was sealed by Henry IV's marriage to Maria de' Medici on 5th October, 1600 (21). More allies were to be found further north amongst the Swiss cantons which, by their proximity to Milan and the early stages of the Spanish Road, could play an important part in shifting the balance of power in Italy. In 1589, Philip II had been able to gain the alliance of the six most important members of the Roman Catholic Borromean League (22). But the League's hostility to Henry IV could not be kept up after his absolution by the Pope, and even less so after the signing of his treaty with Spain. The way was therefore clear for the renewal of the old alliance

(17) Tenenti Piracy & the Decline of Venice 50.

(18) AGS EK1603/8; AGS E617/13; LM v 572.

(19) Rott Henri IV... 73.

(20) cf Venice's passiveness during the strained relations with Spain and the Papacy, 1604-1607: (Corral Castanedo.)

(21) CMH 397.

(22) viz Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Lucerne, Zug, Fribourg: (Bonjour, Offler & Potter 179.)

between France and the entire Swiss confederation. The negotiations were protracted and difficult; the French envoy, Méry de Vic, had to give assurance that his master's debt of thirty-six million livres would be cleared before the final agreement was signed in the spring of 1602 (23). But de Vic scored a notable diplomatic success, enhanced by the thwarting of a Spanish attempt to ally with the Valais (a large area on the borders of Savoy, Piedmont and Milan) in the previous year (24). A purely diplomatic success it was nevertheless to remain. The construction of the well-sited Fort Fuentes gave to Spain control of the access to the Valtelline along the valley of the River Adda, and a treaty with the Grisons inevitably followed in 1604 (25). France's problem was therefore obvious. If she was to act effectively in northern Italy, she would need lands of her own to the east of the Alps. For this reason, Henry IV was to prove so insistent in upholding his claims against Savoy.

One of the reasons for Jeannin's bellicose advice was his firm belief that Philip III would not go to war. In this he did Spain less than justice, for Philip and his advisers were fully alive to the dangers that they faced in northern Italy. The new king had, as Prince of Asturias, been present at the council-session that had finally decided that peace with France, though unpalatable, was vital (26). Youthful and of a warlike temperament, even more than his father he refused to regard the Treaty of Vervins as the final word. From the ambassador in Paris, Juan Bautista de Tasis, came a disturbing description of the French king: proud, self-confident and obviously unwilling to abandon his Dutch allies despite the terms of the treaty, he was as

(23) Rott Henri IV... 196; AHN E1861/sf, document of 31st January, 1602; Dumont V ii 18.

(24) Rott Henri IV... 196; "jamais pendant le xvi siècle négociateur français n'avait obtenu des conditions aussi avantageuses." *ibid*, 187-8.

(25) The fort, built in 1604, was situated upon a ridge close to the shores of Lake Como, near Colico: Rott Henri IV... endpaper; Parker 75; AGS EK1293/56; Dumont V ii 32.

(26) AGS E2855/sf, document of 17th December, 1597.

formidable an opponent as ever. Only the worst could be expected of him, and at no time did Philip and the Council allow themselves to believe that they had gained more than a temporary respite from the struggle:

"the delay in evacuating French troops from Holland strongly suggests that the peace will almost certainly not survive the day they see fit to declare war ... The Council believes that it must warn Your Majesty of the scant possibility that the French will not break the peace when it most suits them."

(Cuanto a las largas que hay en retirar los franceses de Holanda se deja bien entender de su manera de proceder la poca seguridad que se puede tener de que dure la paz más tiempo de el que a ellos les estuviere bien romper la guerra ... Ha parecido al consejo representar a VM la poca seguridad que se puede tener ... de que franceses no rompan cuando les pareciere que les conviene (27). )

When, therefore, the Savoyard ambassador sounded out Philip and his advisers early in 1599 during the royal progress to Valencia, he met with a favourable response. But to his complaint that nothing positive had been done on Charles-Emmanuel's behalf, a less direct answer had to be given. The Duke seemed to have forgotten that Spain had done what she could at Vervins and that through Sesa she was constantly urging the Pope to decide the issue in Savoy's favour (28). Charles Emmanuel, however, wanted concrete assurances. Knowing full well that he could not withstand the impact of a French assault, he had recently taken fright at Henry's expressed wish to by-pass the Pope and meet his rival at Lyons in order to decide the issue between themselves. His fears were echoed by the Constable of Castile and Lodosa, the ambassador in Savoy. Meeting three weeks after their first conference on Saluzzo, the Council consequently decided upon more positive action. They advised Philip to tell the Pope that under no circumstances ought Henry to threaten or intimidate one of the signatories of the recent treaty, and that Spain would not stand idly by if Henry misbehaved. Since words would not be enough, they also decided to send a good sum of money to

(27) AGS EK1426/4.

(28) AGS E1287/244.

Savoy - the figure of half-a-million or a million ducats was mentioned - in the hope that the French would be frightened-off (29). Their determination to baulk Henry's schemes was passed on to Charles Emmanuel, and for a time served to stiffen his resistance to French demands (30). Other factors were working in Spain's favour. Tasis reported that, although "the occasion makes the thief", in his view Henry would not for the moment go to war. Always reluctant to spend what little money he had, even to the point of making himself unpopular with his nobility, he apparently wanted a peaceful and prosperous inheritance for his heir (31). Perhaps most important of all, Henry needed the Pope's good-will to rid himself of Margaret of Valois, a queen who had provided him with no son, before marrying Maria de' Medici (32). Whatever the reason, Henry yielded to the pleas of the papal envoy, the Patriarch of Constantinople: the question of the ownership of Saluzzo was once more referred to Rome, and the marquisate given into the Pope's ward (33).

To Spain's great surprise and concern came the news late in December, 1599, that Charles Emmanuel was about to burn his boats and set out for Paris (34). The foolishness of his decision soon became clear. After a brave initial showing, he seemed to capitulate (35), and on 25th February agreed to a remarkably unfavourable set of terms. His offer of Bresse and Barcelonetta had been rejected out of hand, even though Bresse alone was said to be worth three times as much as Saluzzo: it was strategic, rather than financial, advantage that interested Henry. Charles Emmanuel was therefore to make a choice by 1st June. Either he should return Saluzzo

(29) AGS E1287/28.

(30) AGS EK1602/46; cf /51.

(31) AGS EK1602/70; AGS EK1603/18,49,56,71; cf the identical conclusions reached by the English ambassador in Paris the following year: Winwood i 348.

(32) AGS EK1602/106; Dumont V ii 4.

(33) AGS E1430/156.

(34) AGS EK1602/121.

(35) AGS EK1603/4.

within three years, and receive in return the fortresses held by France in Bresse, Savoy and Barcelonetta: or he should retain Saluzzo and cede to France Bresse, with her main town of Bourg, from the borders of Savoy to the River Saône, and with it Barcelonetta (an area on the western borders of Saluzzo), the Valley of the Stura, the Valley of the Pérouse, and the fortresses of Pinerolo, Demonte, Roquesparvières, Château-Dauphin and Centallo (which was within Saluzzo itself) (36).

Whichever choice Charles Emmanuel made, Spain's interests would be jeopardized. In Lodosa's view, the least damaging settlement would have been precisely that which Henry had rejected. France seemed about to come west of the Alps, whether into Saluzzo or into the fortresses - some of them virtually impregnable - that had been specified (37). The treaty of Paris therefore caused grave concern in Madrid. Everything pointed to a French desire to disrupt the precarious settlement reached at Vervins, and Charles Emmanuel seemed more sinned against than sinning. The Council of State were unanimous in declaring that, in normal circumstances, the new arrangement would have been ample cause for a declaration of war. But the ideal reaction was not the most realistic. Even Philip himself agreed that the Treasury would have to be replenished before Spain could be excused from temporizing even in so important an affair as this. The best course seemed to be to strengthen all Spanish frontiers, at home and abroad, in preparation for the French attack that seemed to be in the offing (38).

As soon as they could, the Council advised Philip to take stronger measures, even at the risk of exposing his flank. For the military situation within Spain itself was far from favourable throughout our period. The most weighty of the frequent memoranda that called for better garrisons on the northern border with France came to the Council's attention in the middle of

(36) AGS EK1603/15; Dumont V ii 3.

(37) AGS EL430/156, 158; AGS EK1602/121.

(38) AGS EK1426/4.

the crisis. The Adelantado of Castile, pointing out the danger from morisco and converso, the exhaustion brought about by long wars and depopulation and the appalling weakness of peninsular garrisons, advised his colleagues to look to home affairs before they interfered in Italy: "one may live without a limb, but not without a head." In his view, Henry IV was far more likely to attack Navarre, to which he laid claim, than Milan; or Aragon, where there were good numbers of moriscos; or Catalonia, which was full of Frenchmen anyway. All that he would need would be an English or Dutch attack upon Portugal, and his victory in the north would be assured (39). In rejecting the Adelantado's advice, the Council shewed their sense of Spain's priorities. Much of what he said was undoubtedly true. But a direct threat was being levelled at another part of the empire; and the councillors, trained to think in imperial terms, were bound to avert it. Since there was neither the time nor the money to deploy forces in two places at once, the more immediate danger had to be attended to. Spain had not yet regained the "peninsular mentality" that Ganivet was nearly three centuries later to see as her true calling (40). In the eyes of the King and a group of councillors - which included Lerma but not the more cautious Idiáquez - war had been as good as declared. All Spain's efforts ought therefore to be dedicated to the single aim of preventing the French occupation of Savoy, Bresse or any of the other places mentioned in the treaty. Come what may, Charles Emmanuel was to be given the fullest support. Philip and the Council therefore decided to despatch the new governor of Milan, the Count of Fuentes, with money and troops and orders to send five thousand escudos each month to Savoy; he was to watch over the Duke's territories as over Philip's own, giving advice to Charles Emmanuel and not allowing himself to be stampeded into hasty action by the more excitable Savoyard ministers (41).

(39) AGS E1487/16.

(40) AGS E1487/17; Ganivet, *passim*.

(41) AGS E1937/11; AGS E1288/105; Fuentes 167 seqq.



Yet there were difficulties in picking up the gauntlet that Henry had thrown down. Towards the end of May, the Pope for the first time made his attitude plain to Sesa. Everything he said was intended to dissuade Philip from going to war. Gently pointing out the undeniable truth that Philip had no legal justification whatever for breaking the Treaty of Vervins by re-opening hostilities, he suggested that the conflict with England and the United Provinces was burden enough. Charles Emmanuel, perhaps thinking that Spanish help was too far away to be of use, had for better or worse signed an agreement with Henry, and he would have to keep his word. Clement would rather see Henry east of the Alps than risk bringing war to Italy (42). Faced with the Pope's declaration of intent, and constantly mindful of the emptiness of the Treasury, the Spanish authorities realized that some less-spectacular solution to the problem would have to be found. The Council, meeting in the King's presence on 25th June, decided to tell Clement that they would fall in with his wishes. If fighting had already begun, Spanish forces would remain passive until the Pope's reaction to the situation were known; and if Charles Emmanuel still held Saluzzo, he should be encouraged, for the moment, to keep it, receiving fifty thousand ducats to help him to do so. But Henry IV's admission to the ranks of the Italian potentates was a matter of supreme importance, not only for the sake of future peace but also, in the Council's view, for the purity of Roman Catholicism in the area: after all, Charles Emmanuel's greatest opponent in the recent wars had been the Huguenot, Lesdiguières. Crucial, therefore, to the acceptability of this new policy was that the status quo be guaranteed. Henry would have to give some sort of security that he would keep the peace after he had received his due from the Duke. The Council laid great store by the assurance, given to Sesa in Rome and repeated by the nuncio in Spain, that the Pope would be foremost in opposing any future French aggression in Italy; and indeed, the Pope had already suggested that, if Spain and Venice joined

(42) AGS E972/sf, document of 26th May, 1600.

with him in guarding the settlement, Henry would be quite unable to make any future headway (43). If, then, Henry played his proper part, Spain would be satisfied: Charles Emmanuel would be ordered by Philip to hand to the French the territories that had been agreed upon, and the Pope and all the world would see

"that Your Majesty's avowed aim is to maintain peace and public tranquility in Italy, as did your late father for many years - and this is the justest cause that Your Majesty could espouse."

(Que el fin de VM desnudamente va enderezando a conservar en Italia la paz y quietud pública como lo hizo el Rey nuestro señor que haya gloria por muchos años, que es la causa más justa que VM debe seguir (44). )

Spain's resolve was soon sorely tested. For, true to his rash nature, Charles Emmanuel took matters into his own hands once more by repudiating the Treaty of Paris and defying Henry to take what he could. Spain, though not unsympathetic, could not go to his aid: "it would be highly inconvenient for Your Majesty to perform acts of war without justification" (45). Even if the Duke would not wait for the Pope's decision, Spain would. But Spain's sincerity was unknown or disbelieved in Paris. Despite his earlier reports that Henry would not go to war, Juan Bautista de Tasis now saw that the French king was greatly annoyed. Henry fully expected that Philip, even if he was too afraid to put his armies into the field (as his ambassador in Madrid assured him was the case), would certainly send secret help to Charles Emmanuel; and he had been told by the Duke himself that it had been Spain, and not Savoy, that had insisted upon the repudiation of the treaty (46). French suspicions and Savoyard lies had by early August led to the mobilization of French forces; by the eleventh, war had been declared upon Charles Emmanuel, and Henry began to move into Bresse and Savoy (47).

(43) AGS E972/sf, document of 25th May, 1600; AGS E1288/152.

(44) *ibid.*

(45) AGS E1288/156.

(46) Rochepot 12.

(47) Cano Saluzzo 123.

Despite their anger at Henry's unjust accusations, the Council of State held to their previous opinion: if Henry would give the necessary undertaking to keep the peace, Spain would fulfil her part of the bargain. It was not an ideal solution, for ideally Henry would never be allowed to set foot in Italy. But at first, Spain could not afford to be other than cautious. The dead-weight of the Flemish war was too hampering: "we cannot attend to everything", it was observed. The one dissentient in the Council, Chinchón, believed that the only course was to oppose Henry's foul plot to intimidate Charles Emmanuel at every point. To this, his colleagues gave a reply noteworthy for its resignation:

"for fear of what might happen, Your Majesty should not assume the burden of a war as unjust as this would be. If Your Majesty keeps your cause just, it may be that we may expect of Our Lord that all will come right."

(Por sospecha de lo que puede suceder no se debe VM cargar de una guerra tan injusta como lo sería ésta y que justificando VM su causa sea de esperar en nuestro señor que todo sucederá mejor (48). )

France's declaration of war against Savoy, however, was another matter altogether. No Spanish monarch could afford to disregard so direct a challenge. France had acted with excessive freedom in the affair, but she would do so no more. Whatever the rights of the matter, Charles Emmanuel was too valuable an ally to lose; common sense, no less than honour, demanded that action be taken. Tasis was therefore ordered to deliver an ultimatum: if Henry wanted Saluzzo, he must first evacuate his troops from Bresse and Savoy. And if, as the Council expected, Henry shewed his true colours by rejecting Philip's wholly reasonable demand, he would live to regret it. By giving him a last chance,

"Your Majesty will have kept faith with God, with man and with what is owed to your greatness, to your noble spirit and to the flower of your youth, and no-one will be able to impute to Your Majesty any

motive other than the pious zeal which you have for the well-being and extension of Christendom. If the King of France does not comply with so just a demand, it will be a sign that his sins blind him to the favour that God has shewn and is shewing him, and lead him to call down upon himself the due reward of his pride. He is not so young, healthy or rich, nor are his affairs at home so well-ordered or acceptable to his former followers, nor will the war in Italy be so cheap and easy, that all in all the result may not be very different from the expectation - especially if the Pope comes to support Your Majesty's just cause, as he has offered to do."

(VM habrá cumplido con Dios con los hombres y con lo que debe a su grandeza y gallardía de ánimo y a la florida edad en que VM se halla sin que nadie lo pueda atribuir sino al santo celo que VM tiene del bien y aumento de la Cristiandad; y si el Rey de Francia no viniere en tan justa demanda será señal que sus pecados le ciegan para que no conozca la merced que Dios le ha hecho y hace y provoque el justo castigo de su soberbia pues ni es tan mozo ni tiene tanta salud ni hacienda ni las cosas de su reino tan asentadas ni tan gratificadas a los que por lo pasado le han servido ni será le guerra en Italia tan fácil y barata que juntándose todo no pueda esperar muy diferentes sucesos de los que se imagina mayormente si el papa acude a la justicia de la causa de VM como lo ha ofrecido (49). )

The exact nature of the action to be taken against Henry was still not specified, for there was one last chance that war could be averted. If the Pope could extract securities from Henry, Spain would be satisfied. But from Sesa's despatches, the Council realized that, despite his former assurances, Clement was not prepared to be firm with France, an impression that was confirmed by a letter from the Pope himself (50). With the last line of defence gone, Philip and the Council had to prepare their own campaign. On 6th September, another meeting was held in the King's presence. At once, Philip announced that he was willing to take a personal part in the handling of the crisis, plainly thinking of commanding any military operations in Italy. The one councillor to give enthusiastic support to the aspiring warrior-king was his favourite, Lerma. Over a third of the

(49) AGS EK1593/6; AGS EK1451/16.

(50) AGS E1288/158,159.

consulta is taken up with his speech. He revealed to his colleagues that Henry IV - "el francés", as he rather rudely called him - was said to have promised Protestant preachers free rein in Saluzzo (51). Philip therefore could not stand idly by: in the tradition of his godly ancestors, he should be ready to devote all his resources, and if necessary his very person, to opposing Henry (52). Even though only six days before the Council had bewailed the impossibility of maintaining adequate frontier defences in Spain itself, Lerma urged that ways and means of raising troops and money for service in Italy be explored, so that Spanish reputation be enhanced by a sizeable campaign (53). The Pope, too, was to be taken to task for having been patently remiss throughout the whole affair. Whereas Philip had always shewn the highest regard for Clement, the latter had not reciprocated: it was a poor return for loyalty to be suspected of self-seeking. Lerma, with his colleagues' approval, advised the King to send a strongly-worded auto-graph letter to Rome, urging Clement to do his duty (54).

Philip and Lerma were alone in their euphoria. Naturally, the rest of the Council had said that Spain should be proud of so high-spirited a young monarch, and they expressed their profound gratitude to the King for his selfless offer. But they could hardly tell him to his face that his warlike impulses were better curbed. When the three confidential advisers - Idiáquez, Miranda and the Confessor - met later in the same month to discuss the issues raised in the recent meeting, more moderate advice was given and more moderate words used. As expected, the Pope had lately written to say that the surest way to peace was to let Henry have Saluzzo so that Christian princes could then combine to launch a long-overdue Crusade. In response, the junta

(51) The source of his information is not clear.

(52) "Es cosa tan propia de rey tan católico como VM imitando lo que sus progenitores han acostumbrado oponérsele con todas sus fuerzas y su real persona si fuere menester."

(53) "Pues si no se entrase con ese pie no lucuría el servicio del reino."

(54) AGS El856/sf, document of 7th September, 1600.

reiterated the policy that had already been decided upon: if Henry gave adequate securities to keep the peace, Spain would acquiesce in the cession of Saluzzo, and so the matter would end. In contrast to Lerma's righteous indignation at the prospect of Protestantism in those parts, however, the junta shewed no eagerness to wage holy war. They expressed sincere regret that Roman Catholicism in Italy should be so threatened, but were content to recommend that the Pope be told that the responsibility to act was his. Philip would feel bound to swell his forces in Milan to protect his subjects from doctrinal assaults: but no more than this ought to be expected of him. Clement had received adequate warning and, the junta hoped, could be trusted to take the steps that the situation demanded (55).

Grave news from Savoy, however, forced the councillors to concur at least in part with their king and his favourite. So rapid and decisive had been French progress that Charles Emmanuel had become, in Henry IV's felicitous phrase, "le duc sans Savoie" (56). And, encouraged by his success, Henry was becoming bolder. According to an intercepted despatch from the papal envoy in France to the curia, the King had openly announced that he would seek satisfaction of the other claims that he had against the Duke, secure in the belief that Philip would not dare to oppose him. He had replied contemptuously to the envoy's attempts to arrange a truce: the Pope's judgement, he said, had been impaired by his benevolence. To a suggestion that Geneva might be adequate compensation, Henry had said that he had no wish to lose the friendship of the Swiss cantons, which he valued more than any city. His chancellor expressed similar views: his master could consider nothing less than a frontier bounded by the Rhône and full indemnity for the costs that he had incurred during the campaign. The effect of the information upon the Council of State was decisive. Negotiation had been tried and had

(55) AGS E1288/159.

(56) LM v 307.

failed. If Henry was so unmindful of the Pope's numerous favours as to make such a series of pronouncements, force was the only likely means of reaching a just settlement. Fuentes should therefore be sent reinforcements "as though for a great campaign"; and the Council felt strongly enough to endorse - this time unasked - Philip's proposal to cross to Italy if the need arose, much to the King's joy (57).

But even anger and dismay could not totally dispel the Council's habitual caution. Within three days, their belligerence had gone. Sesa had sent the all-important news that the Pope had decided to end his apparently endless lethargy by sending a cardinal-legate to Henry with a proposal to leave Charles Emmanuel with Saluzzo and a frontier up to the mountains (58). Once more, there seemed a chance of a settlement without a costly, and perhaps risky, recourse to arms. Constant defeats had shewn the poor quality of the Savoyard army. The obvious compensation - a strong Spanish force with which to back it up - had in the recent past proved virtually impracticable. There had been disgracefully long delays in sending reinforcements to Milan; and although the detection and punishment of those responsible had been suggested by Lerma and approved by the Council, the damage had been done (59). Sesa had for some time suspected that the Pope's lukewarmness was, in part at least, to be explained by the torpor that notoriously attended the deployment of Spanish troops; and the Council was convinced that Henry IV had been so adventurous for this very reason (60). Since there was little hope of remedying the defect, the Pope's initiative was to be welcomed. Naturally enough, his idea of terms aroused some comment. Idiáquez, agreeing with an opinion expressed by the Constable of Castile some weeks before, suggested that to give Henry a part of Savoy was tantamount to giving him all of it,

(57) AGS El288/161; AGS El856/sf, document of 13th October, 1600.

(58) "...y los demás lugares de los montes a su parte."

(59) AGS El856/sf, document of 7th October, 1600.

(60) AGS E972/sf, document of 26th May, 1600.

and that perhaps Spanish interests would be better served by agreeing to the cession of Saluzzo (61). His colleagues thought otherwise. Saluzzo had by this time become such a diplomatic shibboleth that prestige would be better served if Charles Emmanuel kept the marquisate. These, however, were comparatively minor points: the essential thing was to end the affair gracefully (62). All were therefore agreed that Fuentes be given an open commission to advise the Duke as he thought fit, according to circumstances. The snows would quickly bring the campaigning-season to an end, and the French were too well-ensconced in their captured fortresses to be dislodged. Negotiation was the only way (63).

Philip's reply to the Council's prudent advice was affirmative but brief, for he still longed for adventure. For nearly a week he pondered the latest news from Rome and the Council's reaction to it. He was not disposed to allow his hopes of martial glory to fade so easily: why should Henry IV be the only monarch on the battlefield? He therefore sent Franqueza to the Council with a short note that registered once more his determination to go wherever need called him, both to resolve the Saluzzo question and also for a greater good - "the preservation and extension of the Catholic religion and our reputation in public affairs." The Council could not allow such talk to go unchecked. They expressed once more their deep thankfulness at having so fine and so conscientious a master, but were forced nevertheless to state their considered opinion with unmistakeable clarity: Philip should stay at home. He should feel under no moral obligation to take to the field: there was no unanimity as to whether modern rulers ought to go to war in person or stay at home to supervise the operations of their delegates, for experience suggested that either course could lead to success. Particular circumstances were therefore all-important; and for all Philip's justifiable

(61) cf AGS E1288/42.

(62) "La reputación está en acabar bien el negocio."

(63) AGS E1856/sf, document of 16th October, 1600.



anger at Henry's disgraceful and unkingly behaviour; in the present case they seemed to tip the balance against his leaving Spain. He still had no son, and to establish the succession was, in the Council's view, "the matter of the greatest importance for your crown and, indeed, for Christendom itself." Moreover, at the moment he had no money. He would therefore be wise to postpone shewing his personal valour until some more opportune time - for there would be no shortage of occasions in the future, whether the struggle were to prove to be against the French or against the Turk. The Council ended with an impassioned piece of special pleading:

"the Council with due humility beseeches Your Majesty to defer your departure and to look at the matter with your great prudence and sense of Christian duty. The more determined Your Majesty is to go, the more laudable will be your decision to change your mind and fall in with the opinion of the Council, so closely-reasoned as it is. In the meantime, we shall be able to prepare all that is necessary for so great an expedition so that, if the need arise, all will be ready and the affair may be put into execution without delay and with decisive effect and reputation, dealing with the Italian question with men and money without losing time. By waiting, Your Majesty's cause will be the more justified before God, the Pope and the world, and it will be the proper time to go to the fray on behalf of religion and the reputation both of Your Majesty and of all Spain."

(Suplica a VM el consejo con la humildad que debe suspender la ida mirando y considerándolo con su gran prudencia y cristiandad y cuanto más resuelto está VM en ir será significación de mayor valor dejarlo por conformarse con el parecer del consejo con causas tan precisas como a VM se proponen; y entretanto se podrá ir preveniendo lo que es menester para tan gran jornada con fin que llegando el caso lo esté todo y se pueda ejecutar sin dilación y con mucha autoridad y reputación lo que entonces pareciera fomentando sin perder tiempo lo de Italia con gente y dinero y con haber aguardado este suceso estará más justificada la causa de VM con Dios el papa y el mundo y será la propia sazón de volver por la religión y por la reputación de VM y de toda España (64). )

Philip took the Council's skilfully-tendered advice well. Agreeing with the force of their arguments, he announced that he would postpone his expedition to Italy and only go as far as Barcelona, where he could wait upon events. The Council could hardly feel reassured: Philip might still cross the Mediterranean. They were therefore obliged to state bluntly the other, rather more sordid, reason for the advice that they had given: Philip had not enough money. He had just completed a round of trips, made at the time of his marriage, and at great cost. His first military venture, that which in the eyes of the world would set the tone for his entire reign, would require a huge sum. He was "the greatest monarch in the world" and his expedition would have to be the grandest and most elaborate ever known (65). He simply could not afford to make the necessary preparations; indeed, in the opinion of some councillors, there was not even enough money to finance a royal progress to Barcelona. And in the end, it could not be denied that, although Henry IV had taken personal control of French operations, he had done so in upholding legal claims that he had gained by the Treaty of Paris: Philip, on the other hand, was bound by no such necessity (66). Fortunately, Philip was convinced: fortunately, because within three weeks he and his Council were forced to acknowledge that there were barely enough resources to cover the welter of existing commitments in Flanders and Ireland, let alone elsewhere (67). The intervention of the Pope seemed to have saved them all. They could cling to the straw-like hope that negotiation would put all to rights, or at least give them time gradually to strengthen Milan (68).

The hope proved vain, as it was bound to do. Henry IV was not in a conciliatory mood. He continued, quite unjustly, to suspect Spain of encouraging Charles Emmanuel to be troublesome and was still satisfied that

(65) "Ha de ser en grandeza de fuerzas y en liberalidad la mayor que se haya leído."

(66) AGS E2636/124, 123.

(67) qvi p 57. qvs p 146 seqq.

(68) AGS E2023/7.

Philip would not intervene with his own forces (69). He therefore rejected the Duke's offer of Saluzzo and an indemnity of between 200,000 and 300,000 écus: the marquisate had been so despoiled that the indemnity should be raised to a million. By Christmas, Charles Emmanuel had been forced to change his tactics. His offer was now most handsome - Bresse, Bugey and Veroime as far as the Rhône, with the reservation of a corridor through which the Spanish Road could be kept open. To this, Henry added further demands: the cession of the four strongholds in Dauphiné - Centallo, Demonte, Roquesparvières and Château-Dauphin - and an indemnity of 300,000 écus. He also insisted that any corridor be under his sovereignty, but gave his kingly word that he would allow Spanish troops to pass through it. But even before his harshness had become known in Madrid, Philip and the Council had thrown caution to the winds. Compared with what was later to be demanded, the proposed settlement that Aldobrandino had just forced Fuentes to endorse - the surrender of Saluzzo with no French securities for keeping the peace, but with an obligation upon Spain to guarantee Charles Emmanuel's good faith - was comparatively mild (70). Yet Spain found it intolerable. Henry seemed to have played his cards well: Philip had been gulled into leaving Charles Emmanuel defenceless, and was about to have his strategic interests damaged as a result. There was no certainty that, before he moved into Saluzzo, Henry would not dismantle the Savoyard forts that he had captured. Nor could Spain be sure that Henry, from his great new base in Italy, would not launch a series of attacks upon her possessions as former French kings had done. Both Spain's pride and sense of security were at stake. The Council therefore had to advise Philip to mobilize his forces on a grand scale: forty companies should be raised in Spain, at a cost of forty thousand ducats, "arranging everything with such care and resolution that whoever wishes to disturb Your Majesty or our allies may be checked." There were

(69) cf AGS EK1603/106,119; for Henry's attitude, v.LM v 334.

(70) AGS EL430/282,284; Rochepot 55.

likely to be grave difficulties. The Council admitted that snow had for the moment made campaigning impossible, and Philip observed, for once appreciating the point without the Council's prompting, that money was short (71). But Spain had reached the end of her patience: Henry IV was to be taught a lesson.

Once again, more moderate counsels quickly prevailed. The decision to take on so crushing a financial and military burden had been taken in the heat of the moment, and the Council found themselves able to acquiesce in the still-unfavourable terms of the treaty finally agreed upon by Henry and the representatives of Charles Emmanuel at Lyons on 17th January, 1601. Whether such would have been the case if Henry had been able to have his way must remain uncertain. But Henry had difficulties of his own. Although he was in the future to be reticent about his change of mind - he referred vaguely to "various reasons, both of a general and a particular nature" in a letter to his father-in-law - he was more explicit to his ambassador in Spain: "my great desire to please His Holiness and my army's obvious need for peace" had forced him to moderate his terms (72). Although Lesdiguières was perhaps harsh in comparing him to a merchant and Charles Emmanuel to a prince, Henry had indeed to give way a good deal (73). Saluzzo was confirmed as part of Savoy, as were Centallo, Demonte and Rocquesparvières. France received the provinces of Bugey, Bresse and Gex and the fortress of Château-Dauphin, thus gaining a frontier on the northern and western banks of the Rhône and a foothold in Piedmont. For 100,000 écus, a corridor was established between the Pont de Grésin over the Rhône and the borders of the Franche-Comté a few miles away, linking the latter with Savoy and so in theory keeping the Spanish Road intact. Savoy, however, was bound not to fortify the corridor at any point, nor were the troops that passed along it to take supplies from the surrounding countryside without prior consent. As an indemnity, Savoy

(71) AGS E1856/sf, document of December, 1600: "yo espero en Dios que no faltará hacienda para pagarles."

(72) LM v 369; Rochepot 63.

(73) Rott Henri IV... 98.

was to pay 100,000 écus and, more serious, to lose the artillery and munitions belonging to her occupied fortresses (74).

The treaty satisfied none but the Pope. Lesdiguières sourly commented that the single town of Carmagnola on the plain of Piedmont, captured by the French but soon to be evacuated, was of more strategic value than all the lands that Charles Emmanuel had agreed to cede (75). The Duke delayed his ratification of the treaty until March, and even spoke of handing over to Spain the deputies who had so badly looked after his interests at Lyons (76). Of the Spaniards, both Fuentes and Ledesma considered it a defeat: Philip had spent two million ducats and raised a large army to prevent such a settlement, but had achieved nothing that could save his brother-in-law from severe embarrassment (77). It must have been sorely tempting for the Council to approve of Fuentes' efforts to persuade Charles Emmanuel not to ratify (78). But, bitterly disappointed as they were, they could not advise Philip to do other than recognize the fait accompli. A formal agreement had been signed by the two opposing parties and the papal legate, and no matter how disadvantageous the terms, Spain had no right to interfere. Far from punishing the offending Savoyard diplomats, Philip would have to uphold the treaty that they had signed. The most unsatisfactory provision - the fact that the military corridor was at the mercy of the French - was not, however, hopelessly so. At some future date, Spain might be able to buy the strip from Savoy. In any case, as the legate Aldobrandino pointed out to Juan Andrea Doria in a remarkable interview held in Genoa in February, France would only be able to block the corridor by declaring war, and he gave an assurance that, if Henry did so, the Pope would oppose him with an army of his own (79). There was also one grain of solid comfort. Apart

(74) Jeannin 347-8; Dumont V ii 10.

(75) G. Zeller 118.

(76) AGS E1290/130; AGS EK1630/55; AGS E1290/13.

(77) AGS E1290/130, 13.

(78) AGS E1290/13.

(79) AGS E1481/77.

from the single isolated fortress of Château-Dauphin, France had been kept west of the Alps, and Saluzzo, the ostensible casus belli, was to remain with Spain's ally. For better or worse, therefore, Spain acceded to the Treaty of Lyons with a good grace (80). And if they had learned nothing else, Philip and his advisers had realized that the time for an open confrontation with France was not yet.

V. THE COLD WAR.

Although the Saluzzo crisis was the most serious confrontation between Spain and France in the years that immediately followed the Treaty of Vervins, there were a good many lesser incidents that soured relations between the two countries. Historians no longer credit Henry IV with a "Grand Dessein" (1): but in the hope that Spain's commitments would remain as many and burdensome as possible, he undoubtedly made it his business to foment trouble for his rival wherever he could. When peace with Spain was being mooted, he had been reluctant to act without his allies and had wished to see them both included in the 1598 settlement. Once the treaty had been signed, however, he strongly encouraged them to continue their quarrels with Spain and so fight his battles for him. The Dutch needed little urging, but the English were less unbending. As France and Savoy slowly but inexorably moved towards hostilities, there seemed a real chance that Spain and England might reach agreement (2). Henry could not well refuse to allow the two sides the use of Boulogne for their talks, but he did his best to put the apple of discord in their midst. Shortly before the formal sessions began, he was quick to lend his weight to the English opinion that they deserved precedence over the Spanish deputies; Villeroy, standing next to the throne during an audience granted to the English ambassador, observed that England had always taken precedence over Spain down to the time of the Emperor Charles V, and that to open the question would be to damage English prestige (3). In the same way, Henry tried to discourage James I from ending the war on his accession in 1603, receiving in return the tart reply that the new King was not prepared to prolong a fight simply to keep his French brother in peace (4). Although in neither case was his influence of decisive importance, Henry's machinations were known and detested in Madrid.

(1) cf Pfister, *passim*.

(2) qvi p. 182 *seqq.*

(3) Winwood i, letter of 14/24 May, 1600.

(4) CSPV v 90.

In Germany, too, Henry did his best to cause trouble. His links with the Protestant princes, who had provided him with mercenary troops during the recent wars, were in good repair, and they looked to him, as they had looked to Francis I, as their natural ally against the Habsburgs (5). Despite his heavy debts to most of them - Anhalt was pressing claims against the restored House of Bourbon in 1818 - the alliance was to remain firm (6). In his capacity as unofficial patron, Henry encouraged the princes to oppose Spanish interests wherever possible. When the Admiral of Aragon led his troops on to imperial soil and occupied Jülich in September, 1598, Villeroy urged the Westphalian circle to act. Thanks to French pressure, a meeting of the princes in Frankfurt-am-Mein in 1600 agreed in principle to support the United Provinces against Spain (7). Henry was further insistent that Lutheran and Calvinist forget their differences and unite against the common enemy:

"you can take no decision more useful for yourselves than to unite; it behoves you to wipe out all grudges and occasions of discord so as to dedicate your united forces to the common weal, which you know to stand in need of advancement: and if you have any doubts on this score, mark well that the enemies of your liberty are doing what they can to prevent it."

(Sachez que vous ne pouvez prendre de résolution qui vous soit plus utile que de vous unir tous ensemble, car il convient d'oublier et de mettre sous le pied toutes sortes de déplaisirs et de riottes pour tendre d'une commune main à l'avancement de la cause publique, au besoin que vous voyez qu'elle en a, et si vous voulez connaître combien votre intelligence vous y importe, considérez bien que les ennemis de votre liberté font ce qu'ils peuvent pour l'empêcher. (8) )

The greatest danger posed by Henry IV in Germany was his interest in the vexed question of the imperial succession. Philip II had already lighted upon a suitable candidate for the kingship of the Romans in the Archduke

- (5) cf AGS EK1603/37. Juan Bautista de Tasis noted that Henry would probably need German reinforcements before embarking upon a campaign against Savoy.
- (6) Anquez 63.
- (7) Anquez 73,77.
- (8) Henry IV to the Landgrave of Hesse, 1599: Anquez 120.



Albert, and his son confirmed the choice (9). But the delays caused by the paranoic suspicions of the Emperor Rudolph gave Henry an opportunity to disrupt Spain's plans. Of all the candidates, Albert was the least acceptable to him, for his strict loyalty to Spain and his uncompromising dislike of Protestants. At one stage, he considered putting himself forward as a candidate, but in the end reconciled himself to the prospect of one of Albert's less rigid relations as the future heir (10). Spain, however, could only think of Henry's ambition and ruthlessness. Although his own candidature would stand small chance of success, he could be expected to do his utmost to break the Habsburg empire by fostering the claim of some Protestant princeling. The thought was horrifying. If Rudolph were succeeded by other than a Habsburg and heir to the house's glorious traditions, the very foundations of the world would be put out of joint. A politique, a Protestant or a Frenchman could be expected to make peace with the Turk and dismember Hungary; rob the Roman Catholic Church of her nominal lay leader and weaken the power of her effectual standard-bearer, the King of Spain; and completely isolate the Low Countries from the rest of the Habsburg empire. For the Council of State, therefore,

"the solution of this problem is of the utmost importance for the universal good of Christendom. If once the imperial dignity were to fall into the hands of the King of France or one of the heretic electors, the damage would be irreparable."

(El remedio de ello es el negocio más importante al bien universal de la Cristiandad ... Serían irreparables los daños que resultarían si la dignidad imperial cayese en el Rey de Francia o en alguno de los electores herejes.)

(9) qvi p.162 seqq.

(10) Anquez thought that Henry's intervention was caused by a report in the summer of 1600 that Philip III wished to make a bid for the title. In fact, at no time did the Spanish authorities take such a candidature seriously, and Henry's activities antedate by at least six months his receipt of the allegation: Anquez 139; AGS E706/sf, document of 15th January, 1600.

Although Spain's commitments at the time of the Council's memorandum were unusually pressing - Albert had been worsted at the Battle of the Dunes in June, the situation in Savoy was critical and the ill-fated Irish expedition had just been sent off - there could be no doubt of Spain's responsibilities:

"we must seek the solution with the greatest possible attentiveness, regardless of cost or labour, for besides being highly fitting for Your Majesty in the capacity of defender of the faith, upon its success depends the security and peace of Your Majesty's realms."

(Se debe atender al remedio con la mayor asistencia que sea posible sin perdonar a ningún gasto ni trabajo que se ofrece, pues demás de ser tan digna y propia de VM como defensor de la fe consiste en el buen suceso de ella la seguridad y quietud de los reinos de VM (11). )

But undoubtedly the most irksome of Henry's activities was the help that he continued to send to the Dutch. The second clause of the Treaty of Vervins had not specifically mentioned the rebels, but each signatory had undertaken not to aid the enemies of the other (12). Officially, Henry made a show of respecting the provision and would, when prompted, issue proclamations that forbade military service with the United Provinces; and if taxed with a particularly flagrant breach, he would express his anger and demand appropriate action from his officials (13). This, however, could cut no ice. A Dutch ambassador openly resided in Paris, and large sums of money were annually remitted to the United Provinces - in 1605 they reached the level of about a tenth of royal income (14). Henry firmly believed that a Spanish victory in Flanders would bring ruin upon France and that the Dutch war alone had bridled Spain's "inordinate ambition" (15). Since their own expostulations could not be other than vain, the Spaniards placed their hope in the Pope, who was expected to complain of Henry's constant amity with the enemies of Spain and of Roman Catholicism alike.

(11) AGS E2323/116, 25th November, 1600.

(12) AHN E2776/10.

(13) AGS EK1602/62,86; AGS EK1603/79; AGS EK1605/153.

(14) Buisseret, 82, for a table of expenditure from 1598 until 1610: the amount for 1601 is missing.

(15) LM v 572.

Since, however, Clement could not afford to offend Henry and thus only made his disapproval known in fatherly letters, Spain needed some other form of relief if Henry's plans were to be thwarted (16).

Such relief was found in an attempt to pay Henry back in his own coin. He had no shortage of enemies within France. The Edict of Nantes had been to one side inadequate and to the other excessive (17). The King's keen desire to mend his finances made him enemies amongst the needy nobility who had, with some justification, expected to receive royal largesse, and Tasis noted that because of this Henry had to be slow to offend them in other matters (18). The powerful Guise faction had by no means forgiven their old opponent. In token of their wish to continue on good terms with the Habsburgs, they gave a warm welcome in Nancy to Albert and Isabella as the latter were making their way to Flanders in 1599. They at least had stayed in France: Mercoeur, disgusted with Henry, was on his way to join Count Charles of Mansfeldt in the war against the Turk in Hungary (19). For all this potentially-combustile material, Juan Bautista de Tasis was blind to the opportunities of causing trouble for Henry, and claimed that there was no French subject fitted to be a tool for Philip (20). Others were more hopeful. In the squabbles between Henry and his nobility, the Duke of Biron, who governed the duchy of Burgundy, came increasingly to the fore as the potential ringleader (21). Spain had already made contact with him in the later years of the French war. Although he had been named as a member of the war-party in 1596, by the autumn of the same year Tasis, at that time an official with the army in Flanders, saw him as a potential

(16) Even Tasis, who from the first doubted that Henry would go to war over Saluzzo, was perpetually nervous about his designs upon the Low Countries.

(17) cf Mousnier, passim.

(18) AGS EK1602/70.

(19) AGS E616/177, 178.

(20) AGS EK1603/49.

(21) AGS E619/60. The most recent work on Spain's relations with Biron is that by Sr Cano de Gardoqui. Its usefulness is severely limited, however, by the author's examination of only part of the available sources.

ally. He believed that if Biron were paid twenty or twenty-five thousand escudos each month, he would mobilize numerous Leaguer dissidents against Henry (22). The plan was cautiously approved by Philip II: if Tasis could guarantee that the investment would pay regular and tangible dividends, he should pursue the matter (23). Apparently, Tasis could not, and the matter was allowed to drop.

Towards the end of the Saluzzo crisis, however, Fuentes took up the affair. Biron had told him that he and certain of his friends - Montmorency, the Constable of France, Soissons, Auvergne and Joinville - were willing to ally with Philip III in peace, war or neutrality (24). These were amongst the most illustrious and powerful names in France; the entire proposition savoured of another Treaty of Joinville. The report was immensely important - too important to entrust to the Council of State. It was therefore sent to the junta de tres for the attention of Idiáquez, Miranda and Córdoba. There was no doubt of their interest. Philip had been presented with an opportunity to serve Henry as he deserved. But they scrupled to say so in so many words. To aid rebels was an immensely serious step, the more so since Spain was nominally at peace with France and prided herself on her greater moral probity in such matters. They therefore put a different slant upon the matter:

"it appears that the state in which Providence has placed Your Majesty does not allow you to turn a deaf ear to this affair, the motives behind which are the preservation of religion in France and the peace and tranquillity which these kingdoms enjoy, and if Your Majesty closes the door on them, they may be crushed and give in."

(22) AGS E611/138, 143.

(23) AGS E2223/183.

(24) They had already made an approach to Charles Emmanuel during his stay in Paris.

(Parece que el estado en que Dios puso a VM no permite que deje de oír esta plática cuyo pretexto es la conservación de la religión en Francia y la quietud y paz de que gozan estos reinos y si VM les cerrase la puerta podría ser que se anilanasen y rindiesen.)

Although the three councillors were not entirely happy about the ethics of the situation, they advised Philip to pursue the offer (25). Apart from learning that Biron wanted 500,000 escudos, the junta (by this time including Velada) heard nothing more for six months (26).

In the meantime, relations with France had taken a turn for the worse as the result of a diplomatic "incident" of the first magnitude. It began in holiday mood. Whilst some members of the suite of Rochepot, the French ambassador, were bathing in the river close to Valladolid, an altercation with some of the local inhabitants resulted in the death of two of the latter - one of them a cleric - and the wounding of another. The Frenchmen, trusting to diplomatic immunity, promptly took refuge in Rochepot's lodging. Early the following morning, the alguaciles, three of the party of Spaniards and, according to French sources, a mob of over four hundred enraged vallisoletanos broke into the house whilst the unfortunate ambassador was still abed, arrested the offenders and, allegedly, made off with a bonus of 27 or 28 silver plates (27). The French authorities made a great deal of the affair. Sully in later years regarded it as another of the "noires malices" with which Spain dishonoured what she had promised at Vervins (28). In fact, Henry's attitude was unjustifiable. Contemporary theory, although unclear about the status of ambassadorial lodgings, left no doubt in the matter of criminal responsibility: even the ambassador himself could not consider himself immune from the rigours of the law (29). The Spanish authorities were therefore in no mood to take Rochepot's part. The offence had taken place close to the Court and was a flagrant breach of the King's

(25) AGS E1874/sf, document of 17th February, 1601.

(26) AGS E1897/115.

(27) AGS EK1604/67.

(28) Sully i 362; IM v 447.

(29) Mattingley Renaissance Diplomacy 261, 265.

peace; the murdered men had been unarmed; and the action of the alguaciles would have been wholly justified "even if the house of the said ambassador were a consecrated church" (30). The deadlock was broken only by the personal intervention of the Pope, who in an autograph letter urged Philip to clemency for the sake of the peace of Christendom. The letter was not welcome: the Council bitterly observed that the Pope's zeal for peace would be better consumed in protesting against Henry's close relations with England and the Dutch. But by this time it was December, and the case had been allowed to drag on for too long. If Philip were now to have the offenders executed, the world would think that he was acting out of vengefulness and not a sense of justice. The minority of some of the offenders - amongst whom was Rochepot's nephew - was a convenient reason for granting a pardon, and the Council decided to refer the entire matter to the Pope for his decision (31).

The incident had done its damage, however, and the junta de tres next met to discuss the Biron affair in an atmosphere of increased tension. Fuentes had reported that Biron was more willing than ever. The junta now did not doubt what use to make of the information. Henry IV's malign intentions were unmistakeable: unless he could be distracted by troubles at home, he would continue to upset Spanish interests. For the sake of those interests as, of course, for those of Christendom as a whole, Biron's support should be enlisted; or, as the councillors put it with their metaphors somewhat mixed,

"It is as important as the tranquillity and security of these and the rest of Your Majesty's kingdoms and of all Christendom to set his own house on fire, fan the embers in all possible ways, and open him a running sore."

(30) AGS E2636/90: this was the unanimous opinion of the Council of State on 26th August, 1601.

(31) AGS E1856/sf, document of 7th December, 1601.

(Importa no menos que la quietud y seguridad de estos reinos y los demás de VM y de toda la cristiandad encenderle fuego en su casa y soplar las ascuas por todas las vías que se pudiere y tenerle abierta una postema.)

But the small doubt remained: was it proper to do so? Fray Gaspar de Córdoba, as befitted a clergyman, put it into words. The King had sworn to uphold the Treaty of Vervins: even if Henry were oppressing his Roman Catholic subjects and unduly favouring the Huguenots, or even if he were on the point of declaring war, would Philip be justified in breaking his word? Considering that the Protestants throughout Europe and the Turk in the east would be quick to profit from a war between France and Spain, would it not be more proper to stop short of encouraging Biron to open rebellion?

Córdoba's two colleagues were quick to reassure him. Contrary to his reported promise at the time of his absolution, Henry had installed Huguenots in all the most important civil and military offices. Sees and other benefices were bestowed at the whim of women and ruffians upon men who had no intention of discharging their canonical obligations, except for saying a single mass on Red Letter days. As for France's declaring war, the uninterrupted help sent to the Dutch was in itself tantamount to this. Thanks to Henry, indeed, Philip's finances had been so depleted that he could not deliver the ultimatum that the former's actions richly deserved. In the past when France had been weakened by civil wars, Spain, Italy and the Low Countries had enjoyed comparative peace and quiet. Philip would therefore be wholly justified in fostering division within France. It was dubious reasoning, based upon biased or blatantly false data: but it convinced Córdoba and the King himself. The avowedly religious aims of Biron had tipped the balance. An appealing scheme had now become a religious duty, as Philip's rider to the consulta shews clearly:

"since the conventional methods that have been used only damage the Catholics of that kingdom, I find myself obliged to take thought for them, the more so since they so persistently urge me to do so; and since this is to defend the cause of religion, I am resolved to act."

(Pues los buenos medios de que se ha usado son para mayor daño de los católicos de aquel reino hállome obligado a mirar por ellos y más pidiéndome con tanta instancia y con esto acudiendo a la causa de la religión estoy resuelto de hacerlo (32). )

Further information confirmed their opinion. Biron was said to be standing firm, declaring his scorn for the Treaty of Vervins and refusing to accept more than thirty thousand of the fifty thousand ducats offered him by Fuentes. He had also spoken of a possible marriage between the Roman Catholic claimant, Soissons, and the Princess Margaret of Austria if all went well. Although the junta did not explicitly acknowledge the deep significance of Biron's hint about changing the order of succession to the French throne, they saw their plans of bringing civil war to France ripening fast. There could be no question of changing their minds. Henry since 1598 had consistently played false, and Biron's offer was a bargain that could not be refused (33).

But during the next six months, Henry IV's suspicions of Biron grew. In May, 1602, he began to mobilize his forces and by the middle of June had placed the Duke under arrest, accused of treason (34). Although Henry was never quite sure of how far Philip himself was implicated, there was no doubt in his mind that Biron had been encouraged by both Fuentes and Charles Emmanuel (35). For some time, he was expected to declare war, and Tasis, Zúñiga and the Archduke all expected the blow to fall in Flanders (36). In fact, the fear was groundless. Despite his understandable annoyance, Henry knew that he could not afford an open war. If nothing else weighed with him, the unfavourable reaction of the populace to Biron's execution was proof enough that his subjects would not support him if he

(32) AGS E1856/sf, consulta of 16th September, 1601.

(33) AGS E1874/sf, consulta of 15th October, 1601. Fuentes was ordered to continue negotiations with Biron by a letter of 3rd November: AGS E1874/94.

(34) AGS EK1605/72, 85.

(35) LM v 628, 649, 669.

(36) AGS EK1605/96; AGS E620/182; AGS E621/192.



went to war against Spain and the late Duke's memory (37). He was, however, at liberty to stand upon his diplomatic dignity, and did so both in Paris and in Rome. Even the Pope felt that he was largely justified. Although protesting that he was certain that Philip himself had nothing to do with the plot, Clement did not conceal his disapproval. Admittedly, Henry had no business to send help to the Dutch, but this was hardly the same as fomenting rebellion and treason within a neighbour's own kingdom (38).

There were similar repercussions within the circle of Philip's own advisers. None but he, Lerma, Franqueza and the four members of the junta knew the full story and Tasis' reports of the Biron affair took the rest of the Council by surprise. Chinchón, Alba, Poza and the Constable of Castile expressed their firm opinion that, as a general principle, the King had not enough money to finance a war with France, and ought therefore to leave the French Roman Catholics to their own devices. If Philip II had been forced to end the war whilst he still had a large number of French sympathizers under arms, his son was doubly bound to avoid picking a quarrel. If the King had indeed known about the plot, he would have to keep silent: but if not, a strong denial, both in Paris and Rome, was called for. The councillors' veiled strictures were perhaps unjustifiable: after all, the plan to aid Biron had not been a bad one. In part, they may be attributable to pique: Miranda had already as good as admitted that there was more to the conspiracy than met the eye, and the most influential of the King's ministers were conspicuous by their absence from the meetings at which this supremely important crisis was discussed (39).

(37) cf Mariéjol 43; LM v 550. Winwood, the English ambassador, had a low opinion of Henry's threats. "In irresolution he will ever remain; partly upon the weakness of his own judgement which doth never resolve in cold blood but in fury and upon impetuosity as the extremities of his fortunes by force do carry him. He will submit himself and the honour of his Crown to many indignities before he will hearken to an open war: from which the jealousies within the state do dissuade him (as well as his particular inclination to the continuance of peace whereing his wishes are to end his days)." Winwood i 408.

(38) AGS EK1631/181.

(39) AGS EK1426/31, 33.

Whatever the rights of the matter, Spanish interests were in danger. A report that Henry was making for the duchy of Burgundy filled the authorities with alarm: perhaps he would use the opportunity to attack Salins, occupy the Franche-Comté and thus block the Spanish Road (40). Coupled with this was grave news from Flanders - "never has our need been so desperate" - and not an hour could be lost in sending help to the Arch-dukes. James VI of Scotland had now to be regarded as a potential ally whose support should be won, and an envoy was to be sent to his court (41). In short, there could not have been a worse time to risk a war with France. Since the Biron plan had backfired so unpleasantly, Philip at once wrote to forbid Fuentes from listening to any further appeals from France, and urged both him and Charles Emmanuel to act with the utmost discretion (42). Nevertheless, the situation continued to deteriorate. Henry had begun to spread a story that Fuentes had been implicated in a plot against the lives of the French royal family (43). Even worse, he had taken advantage of the Treaty of Lyons by blocking the de-militarized corridor over the Gresin Bridge; two thousand Milanese troops on their way to Flanders were held up for six weeks by Lavardin, on the grounds that they might be destined for the support of Biron (44). Although this was not, in fact, the harbinger of doom for the Spanish Road - for the alternative route through Germany was still available - it was both an inconvenience and an insult to Spain. And it is a measure of the Council's pessimism that their only reaction was to advise that a formal complaint be laid before the Pope (45).

The unaccustomed posture of humility was not to be maintained for long. At some time late in August or early in September, encouraging news came

(40) AGS EK1426/31,33.

(41) qvi p.170.

(42) AGS E1897/163.

(43) AGS E2023/72; Alcocer i 211.

(44) AGS EK1605/100,110.

(45) AGS EK1426/35. The decision was taken on the same day as that to arrange a truce with the Dutch and to win James' support.

from the Treasury. The King and his Council were now given a welcome opportunity to regain their self-respect. Philip believed that, since Henry had broken his word, he himself was no longer bound by the Treaty of Vervins; yet again, he offered his personal services in the field and ordered a mobilization for the following spring. His bellicosity was shared by Lerma: since the navy was in order, the Flemish army now provisioned and the Treasury as full as it was likely to be, could Philip let Henry score a point of such importance without losing face? The various councillors, however, had learnt their lesson from the Saluzzo crisis. Although Philip's honour had been flouted enough to justify a declaration of war, they preferred to see diplomatic, rather than military, measures taken. And for once it was not Idiáquez who propounded this course most strongly, but two men who knew the seamier side of the Spanish imperial ideal only too well: Poza, the former President of the Treasury Board, and the Constable of Castile, who had personal experience of commanding an erratically-paid army. The latter, although capable of the most uncompromising of stances (46), was clear that discretion was, in this case, the better part of valour, "since peace is much more convenient than war" (47).

The crisis resolved itself as Henry's anger began to subside. The first sign of better relations was the proposal that Spain and France unite in selecting a neutral candidate for the English throne. The second was Henry's renewed interest in forging a marriage-alliance with the Habsburgs. The idea had been mentioned in Paris late in the previous year (48), and was to be raised again by Jeannin in a conversation with Richardot in Brussels the following May, but the Council had been unimpressed (49). The

(46) cf Rubio, *passim*, for his rôle in the negotiations that preceded the 1609 truce with the Dutch.

(47) AGS EK1426/37, 38, 39; AGS E1874/sf, document of 11th September, 1602; AGS E1856/sf, document of 16th September, 1602.

(48) AGS EK1604/107; AGS E2511/28.

(49) AGS E620/9.

matter merited serious consideration only when the nuncio in Spain passed on a thoroughly unofficial proposal from Paris: a Florentine confidant of Henry IV apparently believed the King to be willing to help Spain to put down the Dutch in return for the marriage of the Dauphin to the Infanta Anna. Spain's reaction was uniformly sceptical. It was inconceivable that Henry would turn on the Dutch and in any case, as the junta de tres observed, "to entrust him with the pacification of Flanders would be to put our own knife into his hands." Henry obviously stood to gain far more from the match than did Philip. The recent troubles in France had made him fear for the safety of his throne, and he seemed to be thinking that an alliance with Spain would strengthen the position of his infant son and heir. For Spain, on the other hand, the dangers were manifold. Under no circumstances ought the heir-presumptive of Spain to marry the heir-apparent of France. Apart from the inconveniences of governing the joint empire that might result from the match, the Bourbon dynasty was of scant respectability and, from Spain's point of view, had come to power by dubious means. Nevertheless, it was a chance of peace and, in the junta's firm view, as such ought not to be rejected. If Philip's next child were a son, the match between the Infanta and the Dauphin might be considered; and, if a daughter, perhaps one with her. If, therefore, Henry wished to pursue the matter, he ought not to be rebuffed (50). The full Council, meeting some three weeks later, expressed the same views. With needs in Flanders so pressing, Spain could not afford to make a worse enemy of Henry IV: "nothing at the moment could be of more importance to the service of God and of Your Majesty than a good peace" (51). Juan Bautista de Tasis was told to give unofficial encouragement to Henry if the proposal were brought up in Paris (52). Although nothing more was heard of the matter, the incident is a clear indication

(50) AGS E435/29.

(51) cf AGS E621/1.

(52) AGS EK1426/42; AGS E620/11,12,13,14; AGS EK1451/80.

of the lengths to which the Spanish government felt obliged to go in order to maintain peace with France.

Thus, the Biron affair safely passed its danger-point. But Henry's insolence grew no less. New cause for complaint came with the accession of James VI of Scotland to the throne of England in March, 1603. Henry had always done his best to ensure James' success. There had been friendly relations with Scotland for so long that he wished to see in England the pro-French traditions of the northern kingdom. His letter to his best friend in Rome, the Cardinal d'Ossat, stated the position that he was to maintain in the years just before Elizabeth's death: James, although a Protestant, had the best title to the throne, and his progress ought not to be impeded (53). Spain's activities were therefore badly hampered. On the one hand, Elizabeth ought not to be succeeded by one whose dislike of France was less than hers and whose debt would be considerably greater. On the other, Spain was not strong enough to back up a candidate of her own: the Flemish war consumed most of her resources, and she could expect little help from a Pope whose constant fear was of provoking a schism with the Gallicans in the French Church. Even the secret steps that Spain felt able to take were robbed of their effectiveness: the French proposal - almost certainly a red herring - to adopt a joint neutral candidate served only to cloud the issue in the last critical months of Elizabeth's reign. James' accession was therefore proof of a French victory, and seemed to be the earnest of another: by the beginning of June, Sully himself had been sent to bring off an Anglo-French alliance that would, it was hoped in Paris, permanently damage Habsburg interests in London and elsewhere. Although Henry's hopes were not to be fulfilled in this respect, the mission badly alarmed the Spanish authorities, and helped to hasten their making peace with the nation that had so inconvenienced them with her pirates, her Protestantism and her aid to the Dutch (54).

(53) qvi p. 166.

(54) qvi p. 199 seq.

Henry even enjoyed some success in influencing the terms of the Treaty of London. One of Villamediana's main difficulties in the negotiations was the question of trade. In order to destroy Dutch prosperity, Spain had imposed the tariff of 30% on a wide range of goods (55). The tariff, an inconvenience to all including its originators, was made doubly unpopular by Henry's reaction. Contrary to his allegations, it was well within the letter of the Treaty of Vervins; freedom of trade had been promised, but the levying of new dues had not been forbidden. Moreover, no-one was obliged to pay the tariff: a trader could take his merchandise elsewhere, or, if he wished, obtain a passport from the Archdukes and so gain exemption (56). Henry chose to disagree. Perhaps influenced by the anguished cries of his merchants, he imposed his own tariff of 30% upon all imports and exports to and from Spain and her European possessions, with the sole exception of grain. Two months later, this time to French dismay, the tariff was succeeded by a complete embargo (57). The repercussions went well beyond France. As Villamediana saw, English vessels could no longer transport Flemish or Spanish goods to France, and it would therefore not be good enough merely to include England in the new Habsburg trade area. Because of France's retaliation, the 30% tariff would have to go entirely (58). Henry had neatly robbed of its usefulness a bargaining-counter from

(55) AGS E196/sf, document of 27th February, 1603; qvs

(56) AGS EK1426/56; AGS EK1665/5. In fact, since the Treaty of Vervins, Spain had been more scrupulous in trade matters than had France. Despite the plethora of restrictions that Spain's special position made necessary - notably the prohibition of the export of gold and silver bullion and of the importation of English and Dutch goods - French merchants were not badly treated. On more than one occasion the Council of State recommended that mercy be shewn towards French traders who had been guilty of illegalities, and Henry's frequent complaints were always investigated (cf AGS EK1451/53). It was France that had countenanced the only official departures from the treaty: Henry's embargo, declared in reprisal for the Rochepot incident, was quite improper, as was his decision not to allow the importation of Spanish salt and imported silks.

(57) AGS EK1616/113, 114; AGS EK1606/124, 133.

(58) AGS E842/101.

which Spain had hoped great things, and had also made necessary a new policy towards the Dutch traders. In this, as in other matters, "the faithlesness and disordered ambition" of the French king took their toll (59).

VI. THE NUISANCE.

Although historically speaking Spain's main quarrel was with France, there was no doubt that Elizabethan England was a formidable opponent. She was not yet in the front rank of European nations, it was true, but her force was sufficient to affect the balance of power drastically. As the English commentator, Sir Thomas Overbury, noted,

"This part of Christendom is balanced betwixt the three kings of Spain, France and England ... Spain hath the advantage of both the rest in treasure, but is defective in men: his dominions are scattered and the conveyance of his treasure from the Indies lies obnoxious to the power of any nation that is stronger by sea. France abounds with men, lies close together, and hath money sufficiently. England, being an island, is hard to be invaded, abounds with men, but wants money to employ them ... England is not able to subsist against any of the other hand in hand; but joined with the Low Countries (sic: the United Provinces are clearly meant) it can give the law to both by sea: joined with either of them two, it is able to oppress the third, as Henry VIII did (1)."

In the early years of the sixteenth century, Spain's relations with this well-positioned maritime power had been fairly cordial: Henry VII married in turn both his sons to Katherine of Aragon, and for a time contemplated a match of his own with Joanna the Mad. Even Henry VIII's Great Matter did not cause the disastrous breach with the Habsburgs that some Englishmen feared. And with the accession in 1553 of Katherine's daughter, Mary, there seemed a real prospect of an enduring alliance. The new queen was deeply conscious both of her Roman Catholicism and of her Habsburg blood, and eagerly responded to the suggestion that she marry Charles V's son and

(1) Overbury 314.



heir, Philip. The marriage took place by proxy on 6th March, and the couple were finally united in July, 1554 (2).

Ironically, it was the reign of Queen Mary that saw the signal deterioration in Anglo-French relations. Philip was severely disillusioned with his pathetically-doting wife and her failure to produce an heir, and also with the sincerity of the Protestant Englishman. The nation's general, but half-hearted, abandonment of Reform convinced him that, in contrast to the religious fervour of the land of the Catholic Kings, time-serving and personal interest were the dominant features of the English character. In one thing alone the English seemed passionate: in their hatred of Philip and his countrymen. Mary's obvious and occasionally-embarrassing dependence upon her husband and his retinue meant that the Spaniards became tarred with the brush of what was, in reality, an exceedingly unpopular religious policy. Spanish friars were to be seen at the fires of Smithfield; Spanish influence was said to be behind the reintroduction of papal authority and - quite unjustly - behind the Queen's wish that the gentry return to their original owners the Church lands that they had obtained during and after the Dissolution. By 1559, Spain had displaced France as England's national enemy.

The enmity deepened throughout the reign of Elizabeth. In response to Spain's Roman Catholic ideology there now came to the fore one for England: that of the Protestant Elect Nation, whose representatives had in all ages fought for true religion and godliness against popery and superstition, and whose monarch, the new Deborah, had freed the country from the bloody tyranny of her unfortunate Jezebel-like sister, Mary (3). Though prudent by nature, Elizabeth could not disregard the strength of anti-Spanish feeling. Her Parliament, whether through conviction or fear

(2) E. H. Harbison, Rival Ambassadors at the Court of Queen Mary: Princeton, N.J., 1940, passim.

(3) Haller, passim.

for their Church lands, was solidly hostile to Spain; and as her financial situation deteriorated, Parliament's wishes became an increasingly important factor in the formulation of her policies. In any case, Spain's own stance was far from conciliatory. The first years of Elizabeth's reign saw the final codification of Roman Catholic doctrine by the Council of Trent, and with this new weapon the activities of the Inquisition continued unabated. For England, as for other Protestant countries, the spectre of a pan-European Roman Catholic empire under the firm control of the Spanish Habsburgs seemed very real. The fear of a powerful Spanish base in the Low Countries therefore forced Elizabeth and her advisers to overcome their deeply-rooted scruples and send help to the Dutch rebels. Similar considerations brought about the complete change in Anglo-French relations:

"now the only entire body in Christendom that makes head against the Spanish monarchy is France; and therefore they say in France that, 'The day of the ruin of France is the eve of the ruin of England.' And therefore England hath ever since the Spanish greatness inclined rather to maintain France rather than to ruin it." (4)

When, therefore, Philip II declared himself against Henry of Navarre, Elizabeth went to the latter's aid to forge the tripartite alliance that, by the last year of Philip II's reign, was bleeding the Spanish monarchy dry.

During the second half of the sixteenth century, another point of contention had sprung up between the two nations: that of trade with the Indies. The problem was largely of Spain's own making. Her rigid refusal to permit other than Spanish nationals to trade with the New World possessions aroused bitter hostility. To Spanish complaints about infractions of the monopoly, the English had a pithy and unsympathetic reply:

(4) Overbury 314.

"The Spaniards have brought these evils by their injustice towards the English whom, contra jus gentium, they have excluded from commerce with the West Indies. The Queen does not acknowledge that her subjects and those of other nations may be excluded from the Indies on the claim that these have been donated to the King of Spain by the Pope, whose authority to invest the Spanish King with the New World she does not recognize. The Spaniards have no claim to property there except that they have established a few settlements and named rivers and capes. This donation of what does not belong to the donor and this imaginary right of property ought not to prevent other princes from carrying on commerce in those regions or establishing colonies there in places not inhabited by the Spaniards. Such action would in no way violate the law of nations, since prescription without possession is not valid. Moreover, all are at liberty to navigate that vast ocean, since the use of the sea and the air are common to all. No nation or private person can have a right to the ocean, for neither the course of nature nor public usage permits any occupation of it (5)."

The "evils" were of two types: clandestine trade and piracy. English merchantmen did not much distinguish between the two. The need to defend themselves against the Spanish gunboats that were sent to punish their presence amongst the colonists of Cuba and on the coast of Guiana was a plausible reason for counter-attack against Spanish vessels of all types (6). As far as the English were concerned, this was glorious stuff. Fortunes could be made in swashbuckling style and in full accord with

- (5) Camden Annales, sub anno 1580: quoted Cheyney International Law... 660.
- (6) For the excellent relations between English traders and Cuban colonists, v. Wright. The licenciado Francisco Manso de Contreras, oidor of Santo Domingo, complained to Philip III in 1606 of the colonists: "they are the most disloyal and rebellious vassals that any king or prince in this world ever had, and if Your Highness were to appear amongst them they would sell Your Highness for three yards of Rouen silk or even for nothing, for there is nothing they detest more than the authority of the King and his ministers." *ibid.* 354.

England's maritime heritage; and in the process, a blow could be struck at Roman Catholicism. According to Dr. Andrews's estimates, prizes worth a total of between £100,000 and £200,000 were taken annually (7). Between 1588 and 1595, seventy-eight voyages are known to have been made, and between 1595 and 1603 another seventy-three (8). Some were remarkably successful: the Earl of Cumberland threw Puerto Rico into utter confusion in 1598 and William Parker Porto Bello four years later (9). On the Spanish side, there was cause for great apprehension. It was well known, both at home and abroad, that "the sword of Spain was forged in the gold-mines of Peru" (10). The presence of English vessels in the Caribbean and the western Atlantic was perturbing, and the various English attempts to found colonies or bases in the Americas (11) doubly so: for if once the privateers managed to capture the treasure-fleet, all would be lost (12).

Yet the English did not confine themselves to attacks on the other side of the world. After the beginning of direct confrontation between the two powers c. 1585, the very coasts of Spain were open to attack. In 1589, Lisbon was sacked and in 1596 Cadiz (13). The total disarray of Spanish defences was compensated only by the inability of the English forces to follow up their successes: had they done so, Spain would have been in the greatest peril. The latter's opinion of her cocksure enemy was therefore very low; in one of the state papers, England was described as "the head

(7) Andrews Elizabethan Privateering 128.

(8) *ibid* 176.

(9) *ibid* 178; Corbett, cap. iii.

(10) Froude, J.A. : Short Studies on Great Subjects: 4 vol: London, 1890, vol i 458.

(11) Andrews *op.cit.* cap ix; *idem* Caribbean Rivalry 7.

(12) cf Cornwallis 307: "the strength of this great monarchy consists only in the riches drawn out of the Indies, in the soldiers of Spain and the captains of Italy: the first failing, the second would want arms and the third legs." In token of this, the Venetian ambassador in Madrid noted in 1586 that, for a while after the execution of Mary Stuart, Philip was thinking more of an expedition to the Indies to eradicate privateering than of a direct assault upon England: CSPV viii 383.

(13) Hume The Year... cap i; Corbett, caps iii & iv.

and fount of all the evils in Flanders, in the Indies and in the internal peace of these kingdoms" (14). But it was difficult to find a solution. Despite the obvious obstacles, Spanish pride demanded that force be met with force. The opinion of Don Baltasar de Barrientos, whose memorial to Philip III is dated 1598, may be taken as typical:

"it would be neither proper nor profitable to make peace with England: nor would any such peace be firm, for this crown has been extremely offended by that woman (sc. Elizabeth: sic). She is a schismatic and utterly contrary to our religion, and will consequently never trust us; peace with her will be very unsure. We have no need of her, for she can harm and distract us only on two fronts - in Flanders and in the Indies - and by the same token cannot live without privateering. It is not a good thing to make peace with her, for it cannot last: it is better to prevent her privateering and root out the canker of her evil deeds. Moreover, Your Majesty and Your Majesty's kingdoms need an enemy like her to keep you alert, for if peace were to reign on all sides, we should fall into vice and sloth. It would also be most harmful to the prestige of this crown and of Your Majesty's splendid empire if peace were made with her after her many offences and without further satisfaction for past damage to the Christian religion."

(Con Inglaterra ... no es honesto ni provechoso hacer paz ni segura la que se hiciere porque esta corona está ofendidísima de aquella mujer; es cismática y contraria de todo punto a nuestra religión; y por todo esto no se puede fiar jamás de nosotros y semejantes paces son poco seguras. No tenemos necesidad de ella porque en solas dos partes nos puede hacer daño y remover humores: en Flandes y en Indias y por lo mismo que no puede vivir sin andar en corso. No es provechoso hacer paces con ella porque no pueden durar: sino quitarle esto ... y atajar el cáncer de sus malas obras. Y para que VM y sus reinos vivan con cuidado es menester enemigo como éste, que si por todas partes fuese paz también nos perderíamos con los vicios y ociosidad ... y sería gran desautoridad de esta corona y el imperio felicísimo de VM que estando tan ofendido hiciese paces con ella sin más satisfacción de los agravios pasados de la religión cristiana (15). )

(14) AGS E840/36.

(15) BN 904/305 verso, 306 recto.

And not only had immense sums of money and thousands of men been expended on account of England's interference in Spanish affairs: the English and Irish recusants, who constantly appealed to Philip II for protection, merited some tangible return for their constancy and their willing recognition of the King of Spain as the wielder of the sword of Roman Catholic Christendom. The English seminary priests bombarded Philip with schemes and memoranda, assuring him of an immense fund of good-will in England, and urging large-scale invasion plans to complete successfully what had been attempted in 1588 (16). Although Philip was sensible enough not to take literally all that the seminarians said - "these are the ideas of men who wish to return to their homes," he once observed (17) - the fact remained that Spain owed it to herself to do something positive. So perhaps there was more pride than true disinterested zeal in her wish to intervene:

"if the English affair were feasible, it would undoubtedly deserve priority, for in striking the blow there all would be made safe and our reputation would remain intact, quite apart from the godly work that has always been planned in that kingdom, restoring the free exercise of our holy catholic faith, which is Your Majesty's main aim."

(Si lo de Inglaterra se pudiera emprender esto es sin duda lo que debiera preceder porque con dar allí el golpe quedará todo asegurado y entera la reputación demás del servicio que siempre se ha pretendido hacer en aquel reino a nuestro Señor restituyendo el ejercicio libre de nuestra santa fe católica que es la principal mira de SM (18). )

Various schemes therefore came under consideration. A fleet under the Adelantado of Castile was planned for the autumn of 1596 with orders to make for Ireland or, if winds were contrary, for Milford Haven (19); a project to invade England from Calais, using Spanish galleys and troops from the army of the Low Countries was mooted (20); Colonel Stanley, who

(16) e.g. AGS E967/sf, document of May, 1596.

(17) AGS E1429/114.

(18) AGS E2855/sf, document of 9th July, 1597.

(19) AGS E176/sf, document of 3rd October, 1596; AGS E2223/14.

(20) AGS E2223/187.

had begun his chequered career as an officer of Queen Elizabeth, was mentioned in connexion with a plan to harry the English coast with seven vessels and 1,200 soldiers (21); a project to land some three thousand men near the mouth of the Humber - an area said to be bristling with Roman Catholic sympathizers - was referred to the Archduke Albert for his serious consideration (22); and the Council of State in July, 1597, suggested sending two thousand troops to Ireland in the hope of distracting Elizabeth's attention away from the Continent (23). But desirable as the military and naval defeat of England was, in the short term plans to bring it about had to give place to other, more pressing, matters. As long as the war with France and the United Provinces continued, money could not be spared, for the bankruptcy of 1596 had set the seal upon an already unfavourable financial situation. Albert was insistent that real success in England would need thirty thousand troops, of which he could not spare a single one (24). When it came to the point, therefore, Philip and his advisers decided to attend to first things first; and when in July, 1597, the deployment of the Atlantic fleet was discussed, Brittany was agreed upon as a better objective than either England or Ireland: if all went well there, perhaps Spain would thus also win a base for future operations against Elizabeth (25). The failure of the Brittany expedition, like that of the fleet of the previous year, served to underline another, and highly important, consideration: Spain could not hope to rival England's naval efficiency. The absence of careful preparations finished in good time had

(21) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/238; Loomie Spanish Elizabethans cap v.

(22) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/241.

(23) AGS E2855/sf, document of 9th July, 1597.

(24) AGS E613/120.

(25) AGS EK1599/77; AGS E1429/114; AGS E2855/sf, document of 9th July, 1597: "por la justificación tan notoria del derecho la mayor apariencia de buen efecto lo que ocupará a franceses y podría mover a la paz y ayudar a lo de Flandes y enfrenará ingleses y rebeldes a no pensar en más que asegurarse del peligro de las armas vecinas ... esperando en Dios que desde allí abrirá mejor camino para lo de Inglaterra."

made the Adelantado set sail on both occasions ridiculously late in the year, and he encountered nothing but storms instead of the south-westerly winds and currents that ought to have carried him on his way (26). Moreover, the very nature of the Spanish fleet was a handicap. In contrast to the advantages enjoyed by military men, sailors were socially under-rated and badly-trained (27); crews and commanders were multi-national; vessels were royal and consequently suffered from the government's severe lack of money. The strength of the English navy was that its roots were planted firmly in private enterprise; privateering and overseas trade had kept the efficiency of both mariners and vessels in good repair. Spain had no equivalent of Drake (28).

Thus, despite the accession of a more warlike monarch in 1598, the conquest of England remained as unlikely as ever. It was true that the reduction of military commitments brought about by the Treaty of Vervins presented a much-desired opportunity for Philip III to win glory for himself and his armies and to dissipate the odour of defeat that had hung over Spanish official circles since the ending of hostilities with the French. Significantly, one of Philip's first recorded acts was to ask his newly-enlarged Council of State for their ideas about the feasibility of some military enterprise: the eyes of the world were upon him, and his first actions would set the tone for his entire reign (29). But England, though an appealing target, was beyond his reach. Spanish finances were still unstable, and the Council advised the King to defer the matter if he wished to avoid another fiasco (30). Thus was set the pattern for the next four

(26) AGS El77/sf, document of 23rd November, 1596; AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/270,229; AGS El80/sf, document of 28th October, 1597.

(27) Salas 40-9.

(28) cf Corbett 225.

(29) AGS El953/sf, document of 13th December, 1598.

(30) *ibid.* In a memorial presented to Philip, the English Jesuit, Creswell, complained that he had spoken to two councillors, one of them "one of the most respected persons in these kingdoms", who thought that his invasion plans were dangerous dreams and that only a traitor would encourage the King to try to bring them to fruition: AGS E2851/sf, document of 24th April, 1599.



years. Only the most modest of plans were acceptable. Federico Spínola, younger brother of the more famous Ambrosio, set out from Santander in the summer of 1599 with seven galleys of the Spanish squadron and the hope of raising four thousand infantry and a thousand cavalry in the Low Countries for an invasion of England, hoping too to follow up his first assault with a second one of greater weight. But Spínola was not taken seriously by the Council of State, as their calm acceptance of the numerous setbacks that he received shews. After all, it had been his offer to lend money of his own towards the cost of operations that had originally tipped the balance in his favour. Albert's need to commandeer the forces intended for Spínola was unfortunate, as Albert himself was the first to admit, but the war against the Dutch had first priority. And as the situation in Savoy deteriorated, the Council had even less wish to commit Spain to an enterprise that would cost her money and men (31). By December, 1600, opinion was definitely against Spínola, and whilst his privateering off the English coast with a flotilla of half-a-dozen galleys was useful, he was ordered not to try to land. Before long, he was told to concentrate upon Dutch, rather than English, shipping (32).

If a direct assault upon the mainland was out of the question, there still remained England's underbelly, the turbulent kingdom of Ireland. The advantages presented by Ireland could not be disregarded: fewer troops would be needed, for defences were poorer, and the Irish Roman Catholics, unlike their English counterparts, could be depended upon to give spontaneous military support on a large scale. Once installed, the Spaniards could lay

(31) AGS E2511/54: "sangrar las fuerzas y hacienda de acá..."

(32) AGS E2023/3; Alcocer i 93: "de la jornada de Inglaterra que los católicos proponen parece al consejo que no hay que tratar pues la experiencia ha mostrado la imposibilidad que tiene la conquista de aquel reino para hacerse de golpe aunque hubiera más sustancia de la que ahora hay." cf AGS E840/36; AGS E2023/36, 137.

down the law to Elizabeth or invade England at their leisure (33). Links with Irish dissidents had been forged as early as 1569 by the rebel Desmond; indeed, he and his party in the following year had offered the kingship of Ireland to Don John of Austria (34). Contact was resumed in 1593 by the Earl of Tyrone who badly needed aid against Elizabeth's forces and who made great play of his zeal for Roman Catholicism and the wicked efforts of the Protestant English. But although religious considerations undoubtedly weighed with the Spanish authorities, in the last resort it was strategy that mattered. The expedition of 1596 had been provoked by the Cadiz affair earlier in the summer, and came three years after the second Irish appeal and twenty-seven after the first (35). A remark made in the Council of State in July, 1600, makes the position quite clear:

"we think that to protect and help these Catholics will be an act most worthy of Your Majesty's greatness and most convenient for God's service and Your Majesty's: for besides the fact that it will result in the conservation of our holy Catholic faith there, at the same time Your Majesty will be able to copy what the Queen does through the rebels of Holland and Zealand, and at a very small cost."

(Ha parecido que será obra muy digna de la grandeza de VM y muy conveniente al servicio de Dios y de VM amparar a estos católicos y socorrerlos pues demás de que de ello resultará conservarse allí nuestra santa fe católica por aquello mano podrá VM hacer el mismo efecto que la reina hace por la de los rebeldes de Olanda y Zelanda a muy poca costa (36). )

Philip III's first attempt on Ireland came not long after his accession. Information is lacking at all stages of the enterprise: the year 1599 saw a good deal of dislocation in the administration because of the various royal progresses and the double marriage in Valencia. Nevertheless, it is clear that the Adelantado of Castile set off from El Ferrol late in August

(33) AGS E1953/sf, document of 13th December, 1598.

(34) Falls 138 seqq.

(35) cf CSPV ix 469.

(36) AGS E2511/ 3.

of that year, destined for Ireland with a large fleet of galleys and galleons and an unspecified number of Spanish and Irish troops. A serious storm sprang up on 31st August, breaking the fleet's formation, and once more nothing was achieved (37). The failure had its effect upon Philip and his advisers. When in May, 1600, another Irish appeal for help was discussed, it elicited no more than an expression of deep sympathy and the allocation of twenty thousand ducats and some supplies. Apart from this, God was to be left to defend His own cause until Philip could free himself from other matters (38). An expedition to Ireland was indeed the best means of damaging Elizabeth's interests: but shortage of money and the high cost of the Adelantado's fruitless attempt discouraged Spain from taking the matter further (39). As long as resources were being stretched to keep an army in the field in Flanders, the correct course seemed to be to make the fleet ready for the day when Elizabeth, already in poor health, should die, and in the meantime to help the rebels in Ireland (40).

A change in attitude was brought about by a series of disturbing reports from various parts of Europe. News that the Boulogne talks with England were in jeopardy over the precedence question gave a new importance to Ireland (41): only three days after advising against a large-scale involvement there, the doyen of the Council, Idiáquez, spoke in favour of sending a fleet as soon as possible in order to enhance Spanish prestige and so bring Elizabeth to reason (42). Letters from Rome told of James VI's recent progress in winning support for his candidature to the English throne, a threat that Spain at this stage wished to avert (43): Ireland would be a

(37) AGS EK1602/80, 97, 98. cf. *Corbett. cap. xi.*

(38) AGS E2511/15.

(39) AGS E617/41, 236.

(40) AGS E972/sf, document of 11th May, 1600; AGS E2023/31; AGS E1856/sf, document of 11th July, 1600; AGS E2511/35.

(41) qvi p. 182 *seqq.*

(42) AGS E2511/20, consulta of 4th July, 1600.

(43) qvi p. 160.

vital base from which to oppose his designs. Above all the prestige to be gained from conquering so great an area as Ireland "when the world least expects it" was enormous, and Spain's international position could be expected to improve in every respect. Appealing as the prospect was, the Council nevertheless had to pay attention to practicalities. An expedition in 1600 was surely out of the question, for time and money were so short. But since delay could be fatal to the Irish cause, they advised Philip to hasten the despatch of twenty thousand ducats and the supplies that had been assigned in May, and start to make long-term plans for a fleet (44). The King had other ideas. He had always thought the Council's generosity to be inadequate, and at the time of receiving the latest consulta on Ireland he was travelling in northern Castile with Lerma, far removed from the financial cares of Madrid (45). Principle, and not expediency, was to be served. Observing that he had been eager for an Irish expedition ever since his accession, he countered the Council's caution with an order to muster two thousand veterans and two thousand recruits for immediate despatch to Ireland (46). Ten days later, a dazed Council met to discuss the royal command. Having so distinctly advised the King against assuming a new and heavy burden, they were expected to work miracles. Complimenting Philip upon his holy zeal and admitting that success in Ireland would indeed enhance his reputation in Europe - the more so, it was ominously noted, since everyone just then thought that Spain was weak - they remained firm in their opinion: experience had shewn that an expedition that went off at half-cock would jeopardize all the interests, Spanish and Irish, that the King hoped to protect. At least 150,000 ducats would be needed for the equipping and maintenance of a fleet, and the Treasury was unable to provide such a sum. Moreover, the summer was far advanced: in another six weeks any fleet would

(44) AGS E2511/1.

(45) Cabrera Felipe III 73.

(46) AGS E1856/sf, document of 11th July, 1600.

risk damage or even total loss through storms. Nevertheless, the councillors knew their master:

"but since the matter is of such great importance for the service of God and Your Majesty, and the enterprise so worthy of your royal greatness and so appealing to Your Majesty, neither these nor any other difficulties must dampen ardour, but must rather give encouragement to overcome them, so that the valour and greatness of Your Majesty's regal spirit may shine out the more - though this without spurning any of the many means of gaining time so that, if possible, an expedition may be sent this year, and if not, preparations may be made to send one with the January winds next year, or whenever seems most appropriate, trusting that Our Lord will aid His own cause."

(Pero siendo el negocio de tan gran importancia para el servicio de Dios y de VM y la empresa tan digna de su real grandeza y de que VM tiene tanto gusto no se debe por las dichas ni otra ninguna dificultad dejar de la mano antes conviene poner el pecho a vencerlas para que más resplandezca el valor y grandeza del real ánimo de VM sin dejar cosa de todas cuantas se pudieren hacer para ganar tiempo con fin de que si éste diere lugar se haga jornada este año y si no se prevenga para que se pueda ejecutar en las brisas de enero del año que viene o en la sazón que más pareciere convenir confiando en nuestro Señor que ha de poner mano en ella como en causa tan propia suya (47). )

The Council's manifest reluctance - sharply contrasted with Philip's own offer to forgo the money needed for his personal expenses - was overcome only when a blow was struck at what they held most dear. The unwelcome news of Albert's unfortunate engagement with the Dutch at the Battle of the Dunes succeeded where other considerations had failed. A pis aller, a scheme foisted on to the Council by a bellicose young king, now became an urgent and necessary strategic move. The very fact that the situation in Flanders had become so critical made it essential to distract Elizabeth's attention and so prevent her from helping the Dutch to continue their campaign. Equally important was, once more, Philip's reputation; if the enemy could see that, far from being perturbed by the Battle of the Dunes, he was able

to deploy his forces wherever he chose and where his neighbours least expected, it would be greatly enhanced. Philip at first had grandiose plans: ten thousand men at a total cost of 600,000 ducats should be sent to Ireland as soon as possible along with the supplies already decided upon (48). He was, of course, absurdly unrealistic - there were difficulties enough in sending supplies to Albert - and as the summer wore on he seems to have realized his mistake. The captain who was to take the first supplies, Don Martín de la Cerda, received his formal instructions only on 28th September, some two months after the decision to send him had been made (49); and the grand expedition of ten thousand men had by the middle of the same month been reduced to fifteen hundred or two thousand to be sent that autumn or, more probably, in the early spring under the command of Don Diego de Brochero (50). The expedition remained at the top of the list of priorities, for it was still seen as the best way of easing the pressure upon Albert; and as a token of this, the troops for the Low Countries were to be diverted to Ireland, Spain profiting from the financial difficulties that were embarrassing Maurice of Nassau (51). But even in its reduced form the enterprise was beset with difficulties: financial debility and the need to strengthen the Milanesado during the Saluzzo crisis were worrying distractions. It was therefore with genuine relief that the Council heard from Ireland that the rebels felt able to hold out until the following May (52).

The conclusion of the Treaty of Lyons allowed Spain to turn her full attention northwards. A good many troops and supplies had been prepared for a war with France, and the authorities felt that something ought to be done with them (53). Ireland was the national objective, taking precedence even over the plans against Islam (54). The committee set up to organize

(48) AGS E2511/7; AGS E2023/28; Alcocer i 39.

(49) AGS E2604/sf, document of 28th September, 1600.

(50) AGS E2511/13; a consulta of 9th September is missing.

(51) AGS E2511/17.

(52) AGS E1856/sf, document of 25th January, 1601.

(53) AGS E840/41.

(54) AGS E1874/sf, consulta of 17th February, 1601.

the venture therefore felt impelled to plan on a large scale: six thousand men for an initial six months' service and at a cost of 200,000 ducats, a further 150,000 being necessary for the fleet that was to carry them to their destination (55). And despite the multiplicity of adverse factors - the delays, the worsening of relations with France, the need to strengthen Spanish frontiers - the preparations were pushed ahead. In the midst of a pessimistic Court, the councillors made a bold show. The Venetian ambassador reported that "the ministers have embarked on this enterprise when already engaged in so many others in order to shew the power of this crown: nor do they omit to go about vaunting and exaggerating the ease with which in a short time they have put together such forces military and naval" (56). Any lingering doubts in their minds were dispelled by the growing fear that the Irish could wait no longer. If they capitulated to Elizabeth, as seemed increasingly likely, Spain would suffer badly and her money be wasted. The Council therefore strongly felt that the fleet should set off as soon as possible. But the six thousand troops allotted seemed too few, and they observed that ten or twelve thousand would be needed in order to be absolutely sure of avoiding a shameful defeat. Philip, however, chose not to wait. Perhaps realizing that the assembly of extra forces would take valuable time, or perhaps fearful that discretion would quickly get the better of the Council's valour if he delayed, he ordered the immediate despatch of the forces that were already prepared (57).

Nearly a month later, on 3rd September, 1601, the expedition, under Aguila and Brochero, set sail. On board were the 4,432 troops that had been mustered - a number far short of that intended (58). The Council hoped to be able to send the reinforcements that Aguila badly needed: but the problem of where to raise them remained. By December, Lerma was in

(55) AGS E840/41.

(56) CSPV ix 999.

(57) AGS E618/112; AGS E2511/37, consulta of 4th August, 1601.

(58) Silke Kinsale 104.

despair and Córdoba was combining his two offices of cleric and Treasury official by advancing as the sole remedy for the shortage of resources a public appeasement of divine wrath by prayer and penitence in every diocese (59). Aguila's position inevitably deteriorated, and on 29th January the Council acknowledged that it would be a miracle if he had not already surrendered. "The difficulty," as they rightly observed, "is in the men that have to be sent, because there are none." The only spare troops were to be found in the garrisons of Portugal, whose normal task was to guarantee the safety of the west coast from English and Dutch raids. But so hard-pressed were the Council that they advised Philip to send these men to Ireland and to put the barely-competent members of the Extremaduran militia in their place until regulars could be recalled from Italy (60). An atmosphere of profound gloom hung over the Council. In one of the few private letters extant from the period, the secretary of state Andrés de Prada wrote to Moura in mid-February,

"I confess to Your Excellency that, as God lives, I have felt for this Irish business as badly as if the blame had been all mine. Indeed, I personally feel that, since so just and well-intentioned a project like that of the King can only go badly because of the sins of us, its principal movers, my own are sufficient to cancel out whatever good still clings to the rest."

(Confieso a VE y le juro por Dios vivo que he sentido lo de Irlanda de manera que si fuera la culpa enteramente mía, y en efecto hallo por mi cuenta que pues en causa tan justa y con intención tan santa como la del rey nuestro señor nos va tan mal deben de ser pecados de los que tratemos de ello y los míos solos bastan para estragar cuanto bueno se pegare a ellos (61). )

The definite news of Aguila's defeat and surrender therefore came as no surprise. But unshaken in the belief that Ireland was God's cause and that, as He had chastened faithful kings in the past, so now He was proving

(59) CSPV ix 1032; AGS E2511/29.

(60) AGS E840/48.

(61) AHN E tomo 78<sup>d</sup>/102.



Philip's constancy, the Council was comforted in the knowledge that they had tried to do their best. Regrettable as it was, there was no possibility of sending any further supplies to Aguila, the more so since a joint fleet of fifty English and Dutch vessels was reported to be heading for Spain and all available forces would be needed to repel them. For the moment, all that could be done for the Irish was to send forty or fifty thousand ducats to help O'Donnell in his advance on Dublin - though within a week the sum had been halved (62). The summer was a different matter; and no sooner had news of the defeat been received than a committee made up of Idiáquez, Miranda, Córdoba and Lerma was hard at work discussing a plan submitted by the Adelantado, and thinking in terms of a force of fourteen or fifteen thousand men, a mustering in Lisbon and the personal presence of the King there to speed the preparations (63). Once more, there were the usual difficulties. When the matter was raised in the full Council on 13th May, there was little progress to report, and by the end of July Philip had called off the operation because of the delay in transporting from Italy the 6,400 troops that had to be recalled to Spain (64). The need to create a diversion in Ireland was greater than ever, not least because of the Council's recent decision to envisage James VI's accession to the English throne. But whether as a diversion or as a spring-board, Ireland was difficult to get. Even Philip had ceased to be hopeful; and he was sufficiently realistic only to increase by half the twenty thousand ducats voted by the Council to the Irish (65).

- (62) AGS E2511/49,48. Characteristically, Philip thought this inadequate, and seemingly without consulting the Council allocated fifty thousand ducats to O'Neill and twenty thousand to O'Sullivan and the two O'Driscoll brothers: AGS E191/sf, document of 14th March, 1602.
- (63) AGS E191/sf, document dated January, 1602: internal evidence shews it to have been drawn up in mid-March of the same year.
- (64) AGS E840/36; AGS E191/sf, document of 27th July, 1602.
- (65) AGS EK1426/36; AGS E2511/43.

The final blow to the Irish policy came, logically, from the Low Countries. The critical state of the siege of Ostend seemed ample proof that the diversion in Ireland had been, in part at least, a mistake. Although Sesa reported from Rome in March that Elizabeth had been frightened considerably by Aguila's presence in Kinsale and that she was therefore more open to thoughts of peace with Spain, there had been no tangible and beneficial effects either on this front or in the Low Countries (66). Only Córdoba was in favour of launching another expedition: the rest of the Council agreed with Poza, the former President of the Treasury, when he reminded his colleagues that Spain's true priorities were elsewhere:

"although Ireland is very important, Flanders is much more so; and since there is not enough for both, it seems that we must look to the latter as best we may, without allowing ourselves to be distracted."

(Aunque lo de Irlanda es de tanta importancia lo es mucho más lo de Flandes y no habiendo para lo uno y para lo otro parece que se debe acudir a esto con todo lo que se pudiere sin divertirse a otra cosa (67). )

Thirty thousand ducats and a monthly subsidy of ten thousand ducats were, at Philip's direction, to be sent to Tyrone as from January, 1603, as an interim measure: but even this proved to be impossible in the light of the demands made upon the Treasury by Albert (68). As late as February, 1603, the Council noted that nothing had been sent and that Spain ran the risk of forcing the Irish to surrender to the English. The tartness of Philip's reply shews that he too had come to realize that the will was no substitute for the deed: "if the obvious obligation to attend to my many commitments allowed me to give precedence to this, the Council would not need to remind me about it" (69). When finally Don Martín de la Cerda arrived with money

(66) AGS EK1631/88.

(67) AGS E2023/69; Alcocer i 232, consulta of 22nd October, 1602.

(68) *ibid.*

(69) AGS E2511/89.

in Ireland on 12th May, he was met with the news of Queen Elizabeth's death. By that time, thoroughly disabused of their hope of finding a military solution to England's enmity, Philip and the Council were considering an entirely new policy (70).

(70) AGS E194/sf, document of 3rd July, 1603. Cerda had received his written instructions on 24th January, but was not to set off from La Coruña until 24th April: AGS E2571/2.

## VII. FRUSTRATED DIPLOMACY

Unlikely as the conquest of England or Ireland seemed to be, in itself it would be only a short-term solution to the English problem. Spain's official view was cogently expressed by her ambassador in Rome early in 1597:

"if England is not given into the hands of a truly Catholic prince who is deep in Your Majesty's confidence, I do not see how Your Majesty can have confidence in any sort of peace that might be made with either England or France."

(si no se muda el estado de Inglaterra en príncipe verdaderamente católico y confidente de VM y de su corona yo no veo como ha de poderse fiar VM de ningún género de paz que se haga con Inglaterra ni Francia (1). )

Whatever happened, the Tudor line was to die with Elizabeth; and the Queen's constant reluctance to name her successor left a clear field for intrigue. The obvious successor, James VI of Scotland, was prima facie no lover of the Habsburgs, despite his late mother's many links with Philip II and his ministers. His upbringing had been rigidly Protestant, his character was pedantic and argumentative, and his sympathies were with Spain's English, French and Dutch enemies (2). Philip could find nothing but knavery and "siniestras intenciones" in James, and viewed with the utmost scepticism the latter's offer, made through John Oglivy of Poury, to be converted to Roman Catholicism if only Philip would help him to the English throne (3). A reciprocal mission, authorized by Philip, was to be similarly insincere. The envoy, Captain Antonio Escobar, was given a complicated task: blind James with hopes, though without committing Philip in any way; arrange a trade-agreement, whilst secretly asking the Scottish Roman Catholics for help in case of an Irish expedition; and ascertain whether it was practicable

(1) AGS E969/sf, document of 24th February, 1597.

(2) A treaty of perpetual peace had been renewed by James and the United Provinces as recently as July, 1594. Dumont V i 507.

(3) Law; Winwood i 1; AGS E2223/162.

to transport troops from Ireland to Scotland - adequate proof that Philip thought a campaign against James to be worthy of consideration (4). In the event, Escobar remained in the Low Countries and the attempt to gull James was abandoned: but Philip's attitude was not to change (5).

Of the other claimants, the most appealing was undoubtedly Philip's daughter, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, whose claim had recently been publicized in A Conference about the next succession in England, published under the pseudonym of R. Doleman, but in reality the work of an English Jesuit, Robert Persons. Tracing the claim of the Habsburgs back to John of Gaunt and William the Conqueror, Persons' premise was that the former were the true heirs and representatives of the Lancastrian line, whereas their rivals were for the most part descendants of the tainted House of York and as such inadmissible. But since on genealogical grounds James' claim was undoubtedly superior, Persons laid predictable emphasis upon true godliness as the prerequisite in any candidate, a condition which, in his view, either Philip or the Infanta would fulfil admirably. Despite this encouragement, however, Philip did not much concern himself with following the matter up. In his instructions to his nephew Albert in 1595, he noted the existence of Persons' book, but did not see that it was necessary to act upon it. Provided that Elizabeth's successor was suitably fit, he did not much mind who it was to be:

"and because there is no ambition on this side, all efforts must be dedicated simply to ensure the succession of a Catholic prince, and if it is possible for them to find a feasible candidate from amongst themselves, this is what we most desire and what could most quickly bear fruit and restore that country to our holy Catholic faith and the obedience of the Roman Church. This would suffice to give me

(4) AGS E611/230.

(5) AGS E613/2.

great satisfaction without any personal interest, the more so since the monarch, being a Catholic and newly-installed and with rivals, in return for help would have to offer terms that would be of great benefit to my Low Countries."

(y porque en efecto no hay de esta parte ambición ninguna se ha de hacer toda la fuerza en sólo que se prevengan a salir con un rey católico, pues si fueren parte para hacerle de entre sí mismos tal que pueda prevalecer eso es lo que hemos de desear lo que más presto pudiere salir a luz y restituir aquel reino a nuestra santa fe católica y obediencia de la iglesia romana, que esto me bastaría a mí para tener un gran contento sin interés mío ninguno, cuanto más que siendo el católico y rey nuevo y con competidores él nos habría de ofrecer a trueque de ser ayudado partidos muy convenientes al bien de mis estados bajos.)

Only if, after all his exhortations to the English recusants, Albert found that they could still reach no agreement upon a candidate was he to press that of the Habsburgs; and even then, he was to stress to the utmost that there would be no question of incorporating England into the Spanish crown, "for that is something which they would take badly and which has never been contemplated." (6) Philip's comparative casualness in the matter was probably caused by his continued hope of a military solution; having once gained control of England, there would be time enough to find a new king. Consequently, there was no mention of a claimant made in the proclamations drawn up for the Adelantado's use in England or Ireland in 1596 (7).

A change in policy was brought about by the peace negotiations with France. The Pope, anxious to reconcile France and Spain, saw England as a possible common enemy against which his two wayward sons would concentrate their hatred. Since the Infanta's claim to the duchy of Brittany and thus to the French crown would be the greatest of the many stumbling-blocks in the talks, he suggested to Sesa in May, 1596, that it would be good to seek the French reaction to a new proposal: that, in return for the renunciation of her claims in France, Isabella be installed in England by the combined

(6) AHN E1414/sf, document of 21st July, 1595.

(7) AGS E176/sf, document of 23rd September, 1596; qvs p. 140.

forces of Philip and Henry (8). At first, Philip did not rise to the bait: the war with France continued and, as we have seen, he pressed ahead with plans for the invasion of Ireland without taking account of the Pope's idea. But as his attitude towards a peace with France changed, and doubtless disappointed by the Adelantado's failure (9), he became more interested in the offer. Of course, many practical difficulties still remained, and Clement was obviously far too optimistic. Yet peace was patently necessary, and the best means of saving face over the abandoning of Isabella's claims was undoubtedly to compensate her with England (10). How seriously Philip took the offer, however, is open to question. Sesa was provided with two sets of instructions, in the first of which the Pope was to be taken at his word, and in the second Elizabeth's inclusion in the treaty with France was contemplated. In the end, Clement was to be disappointed. Henry IV's reluctance to abandon his allies proved to be stronger than Spain's insistence upon due compensation; Philip badly needed peace, and his daughter's claims formed part of the price that he eventually was prepared to pay. No mention of the English succession was made during the talks at Vervins, nor in the final treaty. By the time that agreement with France had been reached, Philip II was a dying man. Able less and less to follow the daily pattern of work that he had evolved for himself over many years, he began to let go his grasp of affairs. Since his failing energies were taken up with the conclusion of the treaty with France and the cession of the Low Countries to his daughter and her fiancé Albert, he left the English succession question alone. Now that there was no hope of enlisting French

(8) AGS E967/sf, document of 16th May, 1596.

(9) qvs p. 141 sq.

(10) AGS E969/sf, document of 16th March, 1597; also E2224<sup>1</sup>/202: "será bien que acordéis ... a SS lo que más de una vez os ha dicho de cuanto deseaba encaminar la sucesión de la infanta mi hija a Inglaterra quedando reino por sí y allanando para ello los impedimentos de Francia y aun procurando su ayuda en consideración de remitirles de esta parte los grandes derechos de la misma infanta y también los míos a la recompensa de los excesivos gastos hechos en su beneficio..."

support for a military expedition, and since such support would be vital for success, he was wise to do so. At his death, the business seemed as far from solution as ever.

Philip III was less easily daunted; and just as he made a more determined effort to find a military solution to the English problem, so he tried harder to find a successor to Elizabeth. The English Roman Catholic exiles therefore received attention as never before. Joseph Creswell, their self-appointed spokesman and a member of the English seminary in Valladolid (11), appeared before the Council of State in December, 1598, with the first of his many memoranda. Although, as we have seen, his schemes for the invasion of England could not be entertained, his observations upon the English succession were not to be dismissed so readily. In effect, he offered to Philip the opportunity to decide upon the next ruler of England: either Philip himself could make the nomination and secure the Pope's endorsement, or he could supervise the recusants' selection of their own nominee (12). There were many obvious advantages in following Creswell's advice. The English recusants were reported to be disillusioned with Spain's constantly unfulfilled offers of help and protection and in consequence to have spoken of the reasonable possibility of James VI's conversion to Roman Catholicism (13). If Spain intervened, she would therefore avert the danger of losing credibility with her supporters. But there were still greater dangers in acting too hastily. For Spain to commit herself without first having ready enough forces to back up her word would be folly; and the Council advised the King that, for the moment, he should make no announcement (14). Even when Zúñiga, the ambassador in the Low Countries, reported that Elizabeth was in poor health and likely

(11) Loomie Spanish Elizabethans cap. vi.

(12) AGS E1953/sf, document of 13th December, 1598; E2511/54.

(13) AGS E969/sf, document of 1st December, 1598.

(14) AGS E2511/54.



to die before long, the Council did not feel that it was the time to act. Although the Spanish claim was, for them, undoubtedly the best in every sense, they had no means of knowing which of the candidates would be best received in England. Their advice was simple: Philip should keep on good terms with all the claimants - even with James - until the situation became clearer, and not play the kingmaker (15). It needed more than Creswell to force an intervention in England, and his successive pleas met with no further response (16).

The situation became more pressing, though no easier, with the arrival of news that James VI was making diplomatic overtures in Italy and even the papal curia. As early as 1596 there had been talk of his changing his religious allegiance, but it had not been taken seriously. Now the rumour was growing stronger. During a conversation with Sesa, the Pope revealed that James' wife, Anne, had recently become a Roman Catholic and that, one day when James was about to go hunting, he playfully had taken away from her a reliquary set in a necklace and carried it with him. Whilst subsequently crossing a stretch of water in a boat, James and his companions had been surprised by a sudden storm, from which they escaped (in the Pope's words) "almost miraculously". Shortly afterwards, as she was about to be hanged, a sorceress had admitted that she had called up the storm in order to drown the King: but that the demons whom she had sent to do her bidding had returned with the excuse that the reliquary carried by James had frustrated their mistress's designs. The reaction of both Sesa and the leader of the English Jesuits in Rome was predictably scornful. The Pope, on the other hand, had seemed to take the tale seriously, and there were many enemies of Spain round about him to encourage him to do so. Clement had, in Spain's view, already been deceived once about a royal conversion

(15) AGS E1856/sf, document of 18th November, 1599; E2288/sf, document of 30th January, 1600; E2224<sup>2</sup>/3; E2604/sf, document of 6th May, 1600.

(16) AGS E617/241, 242; E2511/53.

- that of Henry IV - and could well be deceived again (17). The Council knew that James' schemes were better scotched, but had to recognize that they had no sure means of doing him down. All that they could suggest was that the English exiles be fobbed off with the bogus assurance that Philip had hit upon a candidate but was not yet ready to announce the name (18).

Only one councillor, Guevara, and he neither the most experienced nor the most prestigious, wished to come to a firm decision about the candidate that Spain was to support. The King, however, was struck by his idea, and whilst following the advice of the majority in what he should tell the exiles, he ordered the Council to discuss the matter fully. On 11th July, the debate on the English succession took place. The Council saw as the first and vital objective the exclusion of James from England, as that of any candidate who was likely to have sympathies with France, as any Protestant would. Failure to achieve it could be the ruin of the Spanish empire: the Low Countries would be completely surrounded by a hostile alliance of France, England, Scotland, Denmark (for James' wife was Danish), the Protestant Germans and the Dutch. On the subject of who should supplant him, the Council's feelings were not as strong. In their view, none of the Roman Catholic claimants ought to be ruled out; a hasty declaration or a public slight could upset the diplomatic apple-cart. The Pope's good offices were essential, and an announcement against either the Duke of Parma or his brother the Cardinal Farnese, whose candidatures Clement seems seriously to have considered (19), could turn him against Spain. Silence would bring with it the flexibility that would be necessary if, the councillors noted significantly, Philip was forced not to intervene. Nevertheless, a claimant had been asked for, and the Council had to comply.

(17) AGS E972/sf, document of 19th April, 1600.

(18) AGS E1856/sf, document of 3rd June, 1600; E973/sf & E1856/sf, document of 3rd July, 1600.

(19) Ossat v 299.

The King's own claim was at once ruled out; it would be acceptable neither to the English, fearful for their sovereignty, nor to the world, envious of his greatness. He had in any case far too many commitments to allow him to be an absentee monarch: experience with Portugal had shewn how a viceregal administration could be a constant drain upon resources. A better claimant by far was the Infanta Isabella. She would excite less hostility, being the sovereign of the Low Countries rather than that of Spain; she was, from the Jesuits' reports, apparently acceptable to large numbers of the English exiles; and, not least important, she could be expected in large measure to pay her own way, both before and after her accession. The one dissentient voice, that of the Archbishop of Toledo, who feared that, although Albert and Isabella were at present Spain's best allies, the leadership of a strong Anglo-Burgundian state might cause their friendship to weaken, was on this occasion over-ruled; the Archbishop's colleagues felt that adequate safeguards could be exacted from the couple when the time came. The Council's advice was therefore wholly tentative and provisional; and they continued strongly to advise Philip to keep silent before the world. Only on two counts did they recommend more positive measures: the first, that preparations for Queen Elizabeth's death should be made in Flanders; and the second, that Sesa tell the Pope simply that Philip wished to see a Roman Catholic successor to the Queen, whilst expressing his personal suspicion that the Infanta would be the Spanish candidate. (20).

But now that Philip had the opinion that he had asked for, he took another six months in which to make up his own mind. The decision was of great importance and the situation extremely complex. Clearly, intervention would be futile without adequate military backing: yet preparations for the expedition to Ireland, which could have been the prelude to so much, were

(20) AGS El856/sf, document of 11th July, 1600; CSP Sp 686.

encountering constant setbacks. But equally serious was the fact that, despite the Council's pronouncement, there was still no obvious candidate to whom Philip could give his unstinted support. None of the native English claimants had much to commend them to the King, for both their religious orthodoxy and their popularity with their compatriots were in doubt. The acceptance or rejection of the claims of either the Duke of Parma or of his brother, the Cardinal Farnese, had to be decided with extreme circumspection: the crisis with France over Saluzzo was looming large, and the Pope, who might be favourable to either of these claims, could not be alienated. For the same reason, the suggestion that Arbella Stuart or one of the daughters of the Earl of Derby should be married to the Duke of Savoy or to one of his sons could not be taken up: Charles Emmanuel's first wife had been the Infanta Catherine Michaela, and his connexion with Spain was too obvious. Moreover, Savoy's entering the lists for the English crown might incline the Pope to favour Henry IV's claims to Saluzzo: and Saluzzo was even more important for Spain's strategic interests than was England, for it protected the Spanish road to Flanders.

Above all, the Infanta's claim was not so obviously suitable as it might at first have appeared. There was no need to take the Archbishop's warning too seriously: Philip was always on good terms with his sister and brother-in-law, and had no reason to distrust them. Furthermore, there was now every doubt that the couple would ever produce offspring. Both had married late: Albert was by this time 41 and subject to occasional fainting fits, and Isabella 34, neither of them having had previous spouses. According to international gossip, in this case purveyed by Henry IV, Albert had not been able to consummate the marriage on his bridal night (21). The real danger was elsewhere. For some years, Spain had been deeply concerned

(21) Winwood i 26.

with the question of who was to succeed the eccentric and intractable Rudolph as Holy Roman Emperor (22). The heir by tradition held the title of King of the Romans, and Spain's unchanging desire was that the next holder should be, as usual, a Habsburg. Rudolph, however, was unco-operative. Sometimes more mad than eccentric, he feared that the election of his successor would be the immediate prelude to his own deposition, knowing full well that his heterodox beliefs made him something of an embarrassment to his family. Whilst the Emperor procrastinated, Henry IV was intriguing with the Protestant princes (23). And late in 1600, San Clemente, the ambassador in Prague, reported that Rudolph might well take his own life during one of the bouts of acute melancholia to which he was increasingly subject. All other problems now became secondary. If the Empire were lost, Spanish interests in Flanders and in Italy would be severely threatened, and the French, the Protestants and perhaps even the Turk would be cock-a-hoop. The Council of State therefore had definite opinions:

"We must look to a remedy with the greatest possible diligence, heedless of cost or effort, for besides being a matter so deserving of Your Majesty's attention as defender of the faith, in its success consists the peace and safety of Your Majesty's realms."

(se debe atender al remedio con la mayor asistencia que sea posible sin perdonar a ningún gasto ni trabajo que se ofrezca pues demás de ser tan digno y propio de VM como defensor de la fe consiste en el buen suceso de ella la seguridad y quietud de los reinos de VM (24). )

Philip II's intention had been that Albert succeed to the imperial title, and one of the reasons that had weighed with him in deciding to cede the Low Countries to him and Isabella had been the need to provide him with an adequate dignity and income upon which to subsist whilst still only King of the Romans (25). In 1600, Albert still remained the most obvious choice:

(22) The most recent study of Rudolph is by Dr. R. J. H. Evans.

(23) qvs p. 118.

(24) AGS E2323/116, 136.

(25) qvs p. 43 ; AGS E614/12.

he was loyal to his family and to the country of his upbringing; his religious orthodoxy was above reproach; his military experience gave him the standing that he would need amongst the German princes. But this being the case, the English succession had to be examined anew. If Albert and Isabella together ruled the Low Countries, the Empire and England, a great new power-bloc would come into being - one that perhaps would outshine that of Spain: the Spanish Habsburgs might well have to cede pride of place to their cadets. And what if the strength of Protestantism in both England and Germany proved enough to force Albert into religious compromise? Hitherto, Roman Catholic Spain had combined the greatest empire in Christendom with the greatest zeal for the faith. Now there arose a new and unwelcome possibility - that an empire, in European terms still greater, would not feel a similar calling to the crusade. It was therefore perhaps not in Spain's best interests to see all three areas united. But a solution to the imperial succession question had to be found. Perhaps it is here that we may see the reason for Philip's delay. The husband of the best candidate to the English throne, Isabella, was wanted for something of far greater importance and was thus rendered unsuitable to be the consort of the Queen of England. In any case, if England feared the prospect of being ruled by the King of Spain, she was not likely to welcome the wife of a future Holy Roman Emperor.

Philip was finally galvanized into action by further news of James VI's Italian diplomacy. Sesa had come to see the Scottish King as the main enemy, a Francophile heretic whose support in England, Denmark, the United Provinces and Italy was increasing rapidly. An Englishman called Constable had arrived in Rome, apparently in order to convince the Pope that James would easily be converted to Roman Catholicism and re-introduce its public exercise into both England and Scotland if only he could be

allowed to succeed Elizabeth in peace; and according to a sinister rumour, Constable's expenses had been paid by Henry IV (26). The Council of State, too, had begun to take notice of James' progress, and sent the King frequent reminders that he ought to make up his mind; they feared that, if the affair were left to time and chance, the recusants would come to terms with anyone, even James, and Spain would be left discredited and powerless (27). It seemed to have come to a straight choice between Isabella and James, a view confirmed by Persons (28). For all the disadvantages inherent in it, some time between 13th December, 1600, and 13th January, 1601, Philip decided to support his sister's claim.

The Council received Philip's decision in a very matter-of-fact fashion, for they were no more eager than before to have a public announcement made. Only Sesa, Persons and the Pope were to be told: even Creswell was to be left to glean the information for himself (29). This secretiveness was never to alter. A decision had been made merely to try to stop James or any other claimant from winning the support of the English recusants; only the bare minimum could or should be done to ensure this if Spain were to avoid being compromised. As it was, the Pope was not wholly satisfied. Although he was reported to be glad that the Infanta had been chosen, he was full of misgivings about the reactions of France. He freely admitted that, from his point of view, the union of England and the Low Countries

- (26) AGS E972/sf, document of 14th December, 1600. Nothing but the worst was expected of the Italians: "la razón de estado de estos italianos consiste principalmente en procurar cuanto pueden contrapesar las potencias de los grandes príncipes y se persuaden que no es bien que Inglaterra se junte ni dependa de la corona de VM que la tienen por tan grande que desean más el cercenarla que el acrecentarla y este pecado en Italia es tan común como el original." AGS E972/sf, document of 20th November, 1600.
- (27) AGS E2023/3; Alcocer i 93: "porque si este negocio tan importante se deja a beneficio del tiempo los católicos se arrimarán al rey de Escocia o a otro de los pretendores y cualquiera que salga con la corona de aquel reino por otra mano que por la de VM será más poderoso enemigo de VM que lo es ahora la reina."
- (28) AGS E972/sf, document of 13th November, 1600.
- (29) AGS E2511/55, 56.

would create a welcome bulwark in northern Europe. But he could not afford to harbour any illusions about France's idea of her international interests: Henry IV had firmly decided to salute James' rising star. In December, 1601, he stated to the Cardinal d'Ossat the attitude that he had maintained throughout: James was more worthy of papal favour than Philip.

"As far as I am concerned, like the Pope, I want England to fall into the hands of a Catholic prince. I am not unaware of the reasons that should make me want to prevent the union of that crown and Scotland, but it is unjust to oppose what is just, and imprudence to engage in a vain enterprise such as that which is being proposed to His Holiness. My opinion is that it would be fairer, easier and more useful to the Catholic religion to think about bringing the King of Scotland into the Church's fold, rather than of opposing his installation."

(Pour moi, je dis comme SS que ledit royaume d'Angleterre tombe entre les mains d'un prince catholique; j'ignore aussi les raisons qui me doivent faire désirer que cette couronne demeure séparée de celle d'Ecosse ... mais c'est injustice de s'opposer à la justice et imprudence de s'engager en une entreprise peu réussible, comme celle que l'on propose à SS; je dis qu'il serait plus équitable, facile et utile à la religion catholique de penser à réduire ledit roi d'Ecosse au giron de l'Eglise qu'à s'opposer à son établissement. (30). )

And since the Pope did not wish to offend Henry unduly, he had to tell Sesa that he would wait until Elizabeth's death or possibly, whilst she still lived, until some special emergency arose before making a pronouncement in the Infanta's favour. As Sesa noted, "There is no woman more fearful of raising her husband's suspicions than is the Pope of raising those of the King of France." (31) The ambassador strongly suspected that, when it came to the point, Clement would not in fact support the Spanish claim but would rather try to mediate between France and Spain (32). As long as Spain could not trust her neighbours, therefore, it was better to remain silent on the succession issue.

(30) LM v 518; Teulet iv 240; Ossat v appendix p. 45.

(31) AGS EK1631/6.

(32) AGS EK1630/207.



But at home too, the union of England and the Low Countries, which the Pope had seen as the nub of the problem, was not viewed with favour. As soon as Philip's decision on the candidature was announced in the Council session of 13th January, 1601, the doubts set in. Whereas six months earlier, the Archbishop of Toledo had been alone in his opinion, all his colleagues were now agreed that the potential danger was considerable. Albert and Isabella might be loyal enough, but their possible heirs were an unknown factor. If Isabella was to have England, it was thought, then the Low Countries should be returned to the direct lordship of the Spanish monarch (33). Reincorporation, however, depended upon the goodwill of the Archdukes, and reports from Zúñiga in Brussels shewed that neither of them was much in favour of the English project. Albert was not well-disposed towards the English exiles in Flanders, and shewed little enthusiasm when told that Philip would support his wife's claim (34). In closer touch with the grim realities of governing a war-weary country, neither he nor Isabella wished for further tasks. Moreover, as Philip was later to discover, they were very jealous for their status as independent sovereigns of the Low Countries (35). For this reason, indeed, Zúñiga had thought better of mentioning the need to reincorporate Flanders to them (36). In consequence, the only means of making Isabella's candidature acceptable both to Spain and to the world at large was from the first a dead letter. Nor could it even be used as a diplomatic ploy with which to allay the Pope's fears. If the Archdukes themselves could not be told directly of Spain's wishes, there could be nothing worse than allowing them to learn of the plan on the diplomatic grape-vine. Loyal members of the House of Habsburg deserved better treatment. (37).

(33) AGS E2511/56.

(34) AGS EK1630/85; E619/13; E2288/sf, document of 22nd June, 1601.

(35) qvs *P.50 5499*.

(36) AGS E619/13.

(37) cf AGS E1856/sf, document of 12th May, 1601.

Nor could it be denied that Isabella would not find it easy to establish herself in England. Zúñiga, who was well-placed to assess the practicability of Philip's proposal, urged the King to reconsider. Exposed to the currents of international diplomacy and able to see for himself the bad state of both army and popular feeling in Flanders, he, like the Archdukes, knew what the concerted hostility of all the northern powers could do to Spain's hope of success against the Dutch. Opposition to Isabella's candidature was the one point upon which all Spain's enemies could agree. Neither Isabella nor her husband wanted the title; and, apart from the seminarians, Zúñiga could see few English exiles who wanted her to take it. A less glorious, but more practicable, course would be to take a more serious look at Arbella Stuart or at the daughters of the Earl of Derby, and buy the support of those important Englishmen who were said to be ready to sell themselves (38). From the Duke of Sesa came similar advice:

"In matters of this sort, I believe it to be very dangerous to contemplate only one possibility to the extent that, if it is not realized, everything is lost; and I think that what we should do is, according to the situation, not to miss our chance and content ourselves with something reasonable, even though in the first place we may prefer - and obtain - the ideal."

(en estas materias tengo por muy peligroso poner la mira en sólo una cosa de manera que si no sale aquélla se haya de perder todo, y pienso que lo que conviene es según la ocasión no perderla contentándose con lo razonable aunque se desee y procure primero lo mejor (39). )

The wisdom of having kept counsel became obvious during the middle of the ill-fated Irish expedition. In January, 1602, the Count of Miranda, who in his capacity as President of the Council of Castile knew better than most the extent of Spain's resources, planted the obvious question: if military methods could not be depended upon, might it not be prudent to think of making an agreement with James VI? Thus far, cordial relations

(38) AGS E620/265.

(39) AGS EK1630/120.

with him had been kept. Philip had sent him a courteous letter in 1600 (40) and Philip II's old plan to send an envoy was revived in the summer of the following year (41). Miranda now felt that the time had come to take more serious steps. The crux of the problem was financial. If Spain could afford to reject an intrinsically-unwelcome compromise, well: but it looked as though she could not. Miranda was therefore disposed for the first time to take seriously James' reported offers of conversion to Roman Catholicism, and he went so far as to envisage an arranged marriage between one of James' daughters and a Savoyard prince. The judgement was realistic, and did not fall upon deaf ears. The shrewd Idiáquez mildly observed that France had always considered Scotland to be the most efficient check upon England, and that perhaps Spain should test this for herself (42). Even the King, though not prepared to take action, saw the merits of Miranda's suggestion, and ordered that it be borne in mind (43). A shortage of money and military disappointment thus bade fair to overcome a good deal of prejudice.

Of course, Spain could not give in all at once: zeal for the faith had to mean more than that. Consequently, when the French ambassador in Rome began to make extravagant claims on James' behalf and to assert that Henry IV could never consent to the accession of a Habsburg to the English throne "en razón de estado", some diplomatic counter-action had to be taken, even at the risk of seeming to take a public stance (44). Yet although Henry's unswerving and public support of James ipso facto made it far more

(40) AGS E2604/sf, document of 6th May, 1600.

(41) AGS E2511/27. Admittedly, the suggestion to send an envoy had come from the Earl of Caithness who, allegedly acting on behalf of the Scottish Roman Catholic nobility, hoped that this would be the prelude to Spanish military help against James. But the Council attached at least equal importance to the mission's allaying James' fears.

(42) AGS EK1426/28.

(43) *ibid.*

(44) AGS EK1631/23; E1856/sf, document of 31st March, 1602.

difficult for Spain to envisage coming to terms with the latter, the need to do so was not reduced. Far from it. Success in Ireland was remoter than ever, and without it there could be small chance of a successful intervention in England on behalf of a Spanish claimant (45). Money was short; and despite a decision in the autumn of 1601 to provide Zúñiga with 200,000 ducats to prepare the ground in England with bribes, the sum had not been found (46). In no way was James an ideal successor to Elizabeth, but by May, 1602, the Council felt that they had no choice. "It will be better to win over the King of Scotland," was their feeling, and they suggested that an envoy be sent by the Archdukes to James in their own name. If all went well, the envoy would be succeeded by an ambassador, and formal diplomatic relations between Spain and Scotland would begin a new chapter; perhaps, James might even be persuaded to send his son and heir to be educated at the Spanish court, and, as Miranda had already suggested, later marry him to one of Charles Emmanuel's daughters (47).

The Council generally, however, were by no means entirely convinced of James' religious sincerity, despite the further offers that had been made on his behalf. In March, 1602, Sesa had reported that one Edward Lombard, alias Drummond, allegedly sent to Rome by James, had spoken of his master's resolve to abjure Protestantism if he were allowed to succeed Elizabeth. Lombard, whose contact with Sesa was through the Savoyard ambassador, was not afraid to point out the unpalatable truth: James had the support of the great majority of Englishmen, and of his foreign neighbours - even of Henry IV. In his view, the English Jesuits were painting a false and unfavourable picture of James and wilfully disregarded northern Europe's fear of Habsburg expansionism (48). But it was no more than the

(45) cf AGS E2511/37.

(46) AGS E2023/105.

(47) AGS E2023/104; Alcocer i 195. This time, there was no question of intriguing with the Scottish Roman Catholics.

(48) AGS EK1631/84; E2511/59.

old story that had been heard at intervals since 1596. When Sesa's letters were considered in the Council, the reaction was once more sceptical: James' offers were purely unofficial and his conversion, if it took place at all, would be for political reasons and in no way proceeding from conviction. Nevertheless, however questionable James' sincerity might be, Spain was in no position to be scrupulous:

"The Council therefore thinks that Your Majesty ought to avoid entering into an agreement with the King of Scotland so long as he does not publicly declare himself to be a Catholic. If there are the necessary resources, the best course will be to go ahead with what has already been decided and exclude him from England, installing the Lady Infanta there. But if it proves impossible to pursue this policy and make the preparations as early and as fully as the importance of the matter demands, and if the said King cannot be excluded, it would be useful to conduct ourselves in such a way that, although he might not be under any obligations to Your Majesty, he will not be offended. And this will be achieved by neither helping nor hindering him."

(y así parece al consejo que VM debe excusar entrar en plática de acuerdo con el Rey de Escocia entretanto que no se declarare publicamente católico, y que si hay caudal para ello lo más acertado será pasar adelante con la resolución que está tomada de excluirle e introducir en Inglaterra a la señora infanta: pero si para encaminar esto y proveer lo necesario para ello tan a tiempo y tan cumplidamente como lo pide la calidad del negocio esperándose cada día la muerte de la reina de Inglaterra no hay lo que es menester ... si no se pudiere conseguir la exclusión del dicho rey conviene proceder de manera que ya que no quede obligado a VM tampoco quede ofendido lo cual se conseguirá no ayudándole ni desayudándole. (49). )

Within a matter of days, Philip had written to Albert to ask why there had been twelve months' delay in sending an envoy to Scotland (50). His letter had a mixed reception in Flanders, for the Archduke and Zúñiga held diametrically-opposed views, neither of which coincided with those of the Council of State. Keen as he was to see the end of the war with England,

(49) AGS E1856/sf, document of 4th June, 1602.

(50) AGS E2224<sup>2</sup>/369.

Albert disapproved of sending any envoy: nothing useful would be achieved, James' accession would not be prevented, and the English recusants would be thrown into still greater despair. Better by far, in his view, would be for Philip to introduce his own candidate into England - though not, of course, if that candidate were Isabella (51). Zúñiga, on the other hand, was more realistic. Despite all that the English seminarians said, James was in a very strong legal and diplomatic position. The Spanish authorities should therefore not simply recognize his accession as inevitable: they should give him positive support. Unwelcome as the union of England and Scotland might be, it was infinitely better that it should take place under a monarch who was under an obligation to Spain. The sending of an envoy was to Zúñiga an essential step, and he did not feel that James' religious allegiance was an adequate barrier (52). Philip and the Council were unable to follow either piece of advice: they had not enough money to do as Albert advised, and they had too much pride to perform the diplomatic volte-face that Zúñiga seemed to want. To send an envoy and neither to help nor to hinder James was the via media to which they were to keep. Their one comfort was that the Pope had decided upon a similar line of action; for, as Sesa pointed out, Clement was unlikely to raise any objection to James so long as he enjoyed Henry IV's support, made offers, however vague, of conversion, and had before him a cloudless prospect of success (53). It was a sad apology for a policy - it was scarcely a policy at all: but the English succession was not an issue upon which Spain felt that a stand could be made.

At least, such was the prevailing opinion in the Council until the advent of the Count of Olivares who, having recently returned from a term as Viceroy of Naples, took his seat in the Council in October, 1602, when the policy was already some months old. One of his first recorded opinions

(51) AGS E2288/sf, document of 19th July, 1602.

(52) AGS E620/264.

(53) AGS EK1631/153.

was on the English succession. Whereas all his colleagues had long ago rejected as unfeasible all claims but those of James and Isabella, he refused to do so. Whilst admitting that Spain had not enough resources to sustain that of the latter, he saw no reason why Philip should not be able to support a native Roman Catholic candidate (54). Although his suggestion was at once rebuffed by the more experienced Chinchón - in no way a friend of Protestants - Olivares felt strongly enough to repeat his point of view at another session early in December (55). This time, he found a powerful supporter in the King, who in his rider to the consulta ordered the Council to study the idea in depth. In the debate that followed two days later, the Council was split. Idiáquez, Poza and Córdoba were for letting matters take their course: the first with his unrivalled knowledge of the international scene, and the other two with their intimate acquaintance with the state of the Treasury, all feared the consequences of intervention. Olivares, by now joined by Chinchón, thought in other terms: at all costs England and Scotland should not be united under a Protestant king such as James was bound to be. For the moment, however, no actual change in policy was to be made. All were agreed that Albert should send his envoy, whether the upshot were to accept James or simply to deceive him (56).

When the Council met once more to discuss the matter some two months later, Olivares found still more support. Why this should have been so is hard to say. There had been no improvement in the financial situation, nor was the war in Flanders being waged with any greater success. A French marriage-alliance had been turned down (57) but the danger from France had in no way diminished; Idiáquez had stressed to his colleagues in November the dire need not to offend Henry IV, and interference in the English

(54) AGS E2023/34; Alcocer i 281.

(55) AGS E2511/82.

(56) AGS E1856/sf, document of 7th December, 1602.

(57) qvs p. 129 seqq.

succession would undoubtedly have this undesirable effect (58). The Infanta's claim had become no more feasible; indeed, the Council openly acknowledged that her own lack of enthusiasm, like her continuing childlessness, had lost her a good deal of support. But Olivares had managed to stir up both King and Council to a recollection of their moral obligation to adopt a positive policy. This was not simply because the recusants were felt to have been loyal over too many years to be left in the lurch (59). Surely, Spain's greatness could not allow her to stand by inactive whilst a matter as important as the English succession, and one that touched her so deeply, was decided by others - the more so since such immense sums had been spent upon enterprises against England and Ireland in the past. And as Olivares seemed to be pointing out, there was no need to think in excessively grand terms:

"In this and other similar matters, my opinion is as it has been in the past: that the greatness of Your Majesty's empire and its preservation does not depend upon adding to it new realms, but in ensuring that there is no other Power that is capable of upsetting Your Majesty's saintly designs."

(para éste y los demás negocios semejantes su opinión ha sido y es que la grandeza del imperio de VM y su conservación no consiste en aumento de más reinos sino en que no haya otra potencia que pueda estorbar sus santos intentos.)

In a very real sense, he was calling Spain to a recollection of her imperial destiny; and it speaks volumes for the mentality of the King and Council that, in the last resort, they were capable of abandoning expediency and returning to principles, for a while at least. A new plan was therefore proposed. The English exiles should choose their own candidate, who would then receive papal blessing and Spanish support, "to the end that a Roman Catholic who would feel bound to Your Majesty should succeed as King."

(58) AGS E2023/126; Alcocer i 252.

(59) cf AGS E1856/sf, document of 4th June, 1602.



The one note of caution, introduced by Miranda, who wanted to be sure that there were sufficient resources available to allow Spain to offend James, was scouted by Philip: "all great matters contain great difficulties: we must overcome them" (60).

Still more significant, however, was the fate that the policy met. For before long a less strenuous alternative had presented itself. According to reports, Henry IV might be prepared to co-operate with Spain in selecting a joint candidate. This in itself was nothing new. Cardinal Aldobrandino had mentioned the possibility to Henry IV at Lyons in January, 1601; and in May, 1602, Zúñiga and his colleague Carrillo had told Philip that, according to current talk in Flanders, the French would prefer to see someone other than James upon the English throne (61). Zúñiga continued to pass on what information he had of French activities amongst the English exiles in Flanders, and foresaw that Spain might extract a good deal of profit from the situation; for if James was indeed to be excluded, there seemed no way of succeeding without French help (62). Even the English seminarians in Rome had come to see that the joint candidate was perhaps the best way of refurbishing their badly tarnished reputation as lovers more of Spain than of England (63). The Pope, wholly in favour of a scheme that would solve many of his preoccupations, urged Philip to take the matter seriously. In his view, Henry sincerely wanted a compromise: he was fearful of Spain, and badly needed peace in order to establish his still weak position on the throne of France (64). When Philip and the Council came first to discuss whether or not to co-operate, their reaction was understandably mistrustful. Not only was Henry notoriously unreliable, as they had found to their cost in the past: they themselves had only just

(60) AGS E2511/88; cf CSP Sp 733.

(61) AGS E620/9.

(62) AGS E2511/52.

(63) AGS E977/sf, document of 17th January, 1603.

(64) AGS EK1631/218; EK1426/42.

been called away from the path of time-serving and compromise. Philip therefore wrote to Sesa on 1st March, 1603, that he wished to know whom the English exiles wished to nominate for themselves (65). But it was soon realized that he could not afford to rebuff Henry. Most regrettably, the Pope had never yet been prepared openly to support Spain against France, and the success of Olivares' plan depended to a great extent upon papal recognition of the exiles' choice. Moreover, Henry, although probably unable to sustain a full-scale war with his neighbour, could still cause a great deal of trouble in the various parts of the Spanish empire. Consequently, and on maturer consideration, Philip wrote again to Sesa four weeks later in quite different terms:

"You are to encourage these plans as much as you can, getting others to commit themselves but without committing me; for it might be that the King of France will agree to exclude the King of Scotland, considering how bad it would be for him to have England and Scotland united under one rule; and it would be very good for the English Catholics if it were announced that both Spain and France were agreed upon putting a Catholic king into England, for it would make the pretenders declare themselves Catholics; and great reputation would be gained by the Pope in bestowing that kingdom with our help and forces. It would also alleviate the difficulties that might arise - who is to succeed and who to make the proposals - if the Pope, as common father, can take a hand in the matter."

(os encargo que las fomentéis cuanto pudiéredes prendando en ellas a los que las tratan sin dar prendas de mi parte pues podría ser que el rey de Francia se acomodase por excluir al de Escocia por lo mal que le estaría que Escocia e Inglaterra se uniesen en una mano y a los católicos de Inglaterra les estaría harto bien que se publicase que ambas coronas de España y Francia de conformidad llevan este intento de poner en aquel reino rey católico, pues obligaría a los pretendores a hacer demostración de ser católicos y al papa se le seguiría gran autoridad de dar aquel reino con nuestra ayuda y fuerzas y la dificultad

(65) AGS E1857/219.

que podría atravesarse en esta plática sobre de quien ha de salir y el proponerla se podría allanar estando SS de por medio que como padre común podría tomar la mano en ella (66). )

But before the matter could be taken further, news reached Spain of Elizabeth's death and James' unopposed accession (67), and the house of cards fell at once to the ground. Spain was not to blame for either ineptitude or sloth (68): factors were constantly against her. She, like the English recusants who were left "in the briars" (69), had to learn the bitter truth that diplomacy without the possibility of military action was of little value.

(66) AGS E1857/223,224.

(67) AGS EK1606/29; the letter, from Juan Bautista de Tasis, arrived on 17th April.

(68) cf Loomie Philip III and the Stuart Succession ... passim.

(69) Hurstfield, 378.

VIII. REALISM AND PRIDE.

The frustration of Spain's plans to conquer England and Ireland and to intervene in the succession question underlined writing that had been on the wall for some time: it might be necessary to make peace with England without first seeking to change her political structure. Even Philip II had envisaged the possibility. As early as 1595 he ordered Albert to give ear to any peace proposals that might come from England (1). After the bankruptcy of 1596, when the need for peace with France had become irresistible, an adjustment of relations with England became still more likely. For not only did Henry IV insist that he would not abandon his allies: Philip and his councillors had no intention of making peace only with France. Little could be worse than that Henry should be able to consolidate his position in France and augment his revenues in peace, whilst Spain was forced to continue a costly war against her two remaining enemies. Albert was therefore ordered to work towards Elizabeth's inclusion in the negotiations (2). The conditions that Philip wished to extract from her, however, were far from conciliatory: although he was prepared to forgo compensation for the war-damage that the English had inflicted upon his possessions, he was inflexible about what he described as his greatest desire - liberty of conscience for the recusants (3). Nor was the form in which the peace-powers were cast tactful: the constant mention of the Pope, the Cardinal of Florence, the Roman Catholic Church and a curious reluctance to refer to "the Queen of England" ("crown" being the term preferred) could not be expected to please Elizabeth's deputies (4). But because England chose to take little part in the talks at Vervins after all, a confrontation was postponed. After some hesitation, Albert granted the English a truce of two months, and six months in which to decide whether they wished to negotiate with Spain for themselves (5).

(1) AHN E1414/sf, document of 21st July, 1595.

(2) AGS E2855/sf, document of 13th November, 1595; qvs p.84 seqq.

(3) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/202.

(4) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/4; E2864/65, 97.

(5) AGS E615/92, 106, 108, 112, 113.

Whilst Elizabeth prevaricated, Albert had no doubts about the desirability of peace. Not only did he wish to extend the six-month period already granted: he saw the forthcoming cession of the Low Countries to him and his fiancée, Isabella, as a golden opportunity to send an embassy to England, on the grounds that no quarrel existed between Elizabeth and the new Flemish sovereigns (6). Owing to a gap in the correspondence, we do not know the exact reaction of the Spanish authorities to the proposal. But a letter written by Albert's locum tenens, the Cardinal Archduke Andrew of Austria, shews that it had been agreed both in Spain and Flanders that he should send an envoy to England in his own name, and that he was not acting on a personal whim (7). The man selected for the task, Jerome Coemans, was ordered to act with the utmost prudence and to stress to the English that the initiative was entirely Andrew's, so as not to compromise Albert and Isabella. But, unknown to the authorities in Madrid, he was also given further instructions by Andrew. First, he was to say that Andrew wished to bring to an end the miseries caused by so long a war; and secondly, that he understood both Philip and the Archdukes to be in favour of an offensive and defensive alliance with Elizabeth (8). This was going too far and too fast for Philip and the Council; for all his alleged precautions, Andrew had jeopardized Spanish dignity by appearing too eager, and he was sent a strong rebuke (9). Nevertheless, Coemans' friendly reception in London could not be disregarded. There were, of course, foreseeable difficulties. Elizabeth might be wholly insincere and desirous only of gaining a respite under false pretences before returning to the fray with renewed vigour: though a fleet assembled in La Coruña under the Adelantado was felt to be a sufficient safeguard against the possibility. More fundamental was the morality of negotiating with the excommunicated Elizabeth at all. The royal

(6) AGS EK1460/3.

(7) AGS E615/42; AGR PEA 429<sup>2</sup>/sf, document of 31st (sic) September, 1598.

(8) AGS E616/16.

(9) AGS E2224<sup>1</sup>/334, 335, 336.

confessor, Córdoba, to whom the problem was referred, fortunately saw no obstacle: in his view, the main effect of peace with England would be to allow Philip to regain his strength "so as subsequently to be able to dedicate himself more fully to the defence of the Catholic cause". Two other possible benefits were mentioned. Spain might be able to insist upon the granting of liberty of conscience to the recusants as the price of a treaty; so strongly did the Council feel, indeed, that, like Philip II, they were prepared to write off their claims for compensation, and for a time even thought of giving up their claims to the Dutch towns held in pledge by Elizabeth, if only their religious demands were met (10). Moreover, peace in the north would leave Philip free to deal with the corsairs of Algiers and so to emulate the deeds of his grandfather (11). Coming to terms with England therefore need not be considered disgraceful - a matter of great importance especially in the first years of Philip III's reign (12).

Much would depend upon the quality of the Spanish negotiators. Zúñiga, the ambassador in Brussels, had stressed the great importance of providing a counter-weight to the Flemish representatives, whose presence was made necessary by the newly-granted sovereignty of Albert and Isabella. Richardot and Verreyken were thoroughly loyal to Spain, but Zúñiga feared that they would inevitably share their compatriots' wish for peace at virtually any price, and especially at the cost of the religious concessions that Spain hoped to exact from the English:

"Although they may be Catholics - as I believe them to be - because they have been raised amongst heretics, they lack that purity in religious matters and the zeal for the conservation and extension of the faith of those that have been born where such things are so highly regarded."

(10) cf BN 6170/140; AGS E1855/sf, consulta of 20th June, 1599.

(11) AGS E1855/sf, consulta of 20th June, 1599: "cosa que tanto han deseado sus pasados de VM y que el emperador nuestro señor abuelo de VM pasó en persona a ello."

(12) cf CSPV ix 834, 837, 852: the Venetian ambassador was convinced that peace was badly wanted in Madrid.

(aunque sean católicos [que cierto creo que lo son] como criados entre herejes no tienen aquella pureza en las cosas de la religión ni el celo de su conservación y aumento que los que nacieron donde está tan en su punto (13). )

At his request, therefore, Don Hernando de Carrillo was sent to complete the team (14), and although the English sources give the impression that Richardot and Verreyken were in the forefront during the talks, in reality the direction came from the two Spaniards. A further consideration was where the meetings should take place. After an initial hope that the English would agree to come to Flanders as guests, Spain finally agreed to hold the conference in Boulogne which, as part of neutral France, gave an advantage to neither side (15). Of far greater importance were the conditions that Spain intended to insist upon. The high hopes of June, 1599, which had been expressed during Philip's honeymoon, were quickly supplanted by a more pragmatic attitude. Religious considerations were still given first place in the instructions given to Carrillo on 29th February, 1600: but the envoy was told that, if it proved impossible to obtain liberty of conscience and worship for the recusants, he was to write to Spain for further instructions rather than break off the discussions entirely. Compensation for war-damage was still to be used as a pawn: but the return of the Dutch cautionary towns was now regarded as essential. Two other important demands were to be made: England should abandon her alliance with the United Provinces; and, above all, her mariners should cease their intrusions into the Spanish and Portuguese possessions in the New World (16). Spain's honour was at every point to be maintained; and in order that there should be no mistake, both Zúñiga and Carrillo were warned not to shew themselves eager for a settlement (17).

(13) AGS E2288/sf, documents of 12th and 30th January, 1600.

(14) AGS E1855/sf, document of 22nd June, 1599. Two others, nominated by the Council, the Admiral of Aragon and Don Diego de Ibarra, dropped out.

(15) AGS E1855/sf, document of 22nd June, 1599; E617/163.

(16) AGS E1855/sf, document of 22nd June, 1599; BN 6170/140.

(17) AGS E2511/21; CSPSp 678.

In the meantime, Coemans had made another three trips to England, on the last of which he carried with him a letter from Albert to Elizabeth - in Zúñiga's opinion couched in over-deferential terms - and returned with a reply. The upshot had been clear signs on the part of the English that they were prepared to envisage a peace treaty (18). In mid-January Thomas Edmondes arrived in Brussels, and during the course of his stay agreed in principle to the holding of the talks in Boulogne. In return, Verreyken was sent to London in order to sound out Elizabeth's opinion of the issues that were likely to be raised in the treaty (19). These exchanges finally bore fruit when, on 28th May, 1600, negotiations between the two sides began at Boulogne. From the outset, there was little chance of agreement. Spain's firmness in her demands was no greater than that of England: Elizabeth and her ministers had already decided to make no concessions apart from cutting off supplies of troops to the Dutch (20). Scarcely had an initial difficulty about the nature and scope of the Spanish and Flemish peace powers been overcome when there arose the obstacle upon which the whole treaty was to founder: which side was to take ceremonial precedence? The mid-twentieth century claims to have neither sympathy with nor understanding of the precedence disputes of an earlier period. Yet the principle of which group of envoys was to sit down at the negotiating-table first was, at the time, of vital importance. To give way was to lose face and, it was feared, thereby to open the door to disrespect of every kind from all other nations. The English government had decided a good month before the talks were due to begin that their representatives would make a formal claim to precedence. Indeed, the great antiquarian, Sir Robert Cotton, provided a list of seven irrefutable grounds for doing so (21). It was not that Elizabeth and her ministers were not sincere in coming to the conference: Cecil, the leading light in

(18) AGS E616/6, 118, 182.

(19) AGS E617/163.

(20) Sarum x 145; Birch 190 seqq.

(21) Winwood i 171, 204; Sarum x 166.



the government, had already expressed a wish that "the war may receive an end with honourable and safe conditions", and the news of the final breakdown of talks was not to be well-received in London (22). But England had no intention of negating many years' resistance to the national enemy by bowing down to a demand that they believed to be wholly unreasonable. In the past, England had taken precedence over the Kings of Castile and León and the Kings of Aragon, and there seemed no reason to change the practice; in effect, England chose to disregard the fact that Spain, far from being a weak and often purely theoretical confederation of kingdoms threatened by the Moors, had become a great empire. The Spanish reaction was predictably violent. Under no circumstances would they submit to England. In a list of counter-precedents, they made full use of that chestnut of sixteenth-century Spanish historiography, the unity of Spain under the Gothic kings, of whom Philip III was the direct heir. England's offer to share equality with the Spanish and Flemish envoys was similarly out of the question: Spain deserved precedence and intended to receive it (23). Zúñiga and Carrillo felt that they could afford to hold out: it was reported that the whole idea had been put into Elizabeth's head by the hotheads at court, and that she herself felt daily in greater need of peace (24).

The Council of State was entirely in agreement. The English demands were in their view "arrogant and unreasonable"; indeed, Zúñiga and his colleagues were felt to have been over-eager to justify their position. Philip III was::

"King and Lord of all Spain and of many other great kingdoms; and further taking into account Your Majesty's age, noble spirit and valour, there is and can be no equality with the Queen of England without sustaining grave damage to your reputation."

(22) Winwood i 106, 222.

(23) AGS E840/21, 25.

(24) AGS E840/10; CSPSp 683. For the course of the negotiations, v. AGS E840/8, 10, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25; Winwood i 186 seqq.; Gerson; Hamy; AGR PEA 363.

(rey y señor de toda España y de otros muchos y muy grandes reinos, mayormente anadiéndose a esto la edad, gallardía de ánimo y valor de VM en quien no cabe ni puede caber igualdad con la reina de Inglaterra sino fuese con tan notable quiebra de la reputación.)

The truth was that Spain, no less than England, was not prepared to end a costly and exhausting war with the slightest tarnish upon her honour; and in 1600, her concept of what that honour demanded was still high. The most realistic member of the Council, Idiáquez, wished to salvage something from the situation by arranging for meetings to be held in Zúñiga's lodging: this would count as Spanish territory in Spain's eyes, and the English could receive the precedence owed to guests. But only one of his colleagues agreed with him: the rest, and Philip himself, refused to make even this concession. The talks should be held on completely neutral ground, the English should give way, and Spain's reputation should be upheld to the utmost (25). Orders to Boulogne were sent accordingly, and the inevitable ending of the conference took place in an atmosphere of mutual reluctance, perhaps more marked on the English than on the Spanish side, on 7th August (26).

Despite the failure of the treaty of Boulogne, some progress towards the ending of the war had been made. Contact had been established; religion and the Dutch cautionary towns had emerged as two of the likeliest bones of contention if once the difficulties over precedence could be resolved; and the English had expressed a willingness to see an end to the Dutch war. Indeed, the English made a last-minute offer to try to bring the Dutch into the treaty, and so resolve the precedence dispute by arranging the next conference in the United Provinces or the loyal Low Countries, where the English could receive precedence (27). The idea was well-received in Spain,

- (25) AGS E2511/20: "... de debe mirar tanto que será de mucho menos inconveniente no hacer la paz que perder el mínimo punto de ella (sc. la reputación) no viniendo la reina a este tratado movida de virtud ni celo del bien universal sino forzada de la pura necesidad."
- (26) AGS E2288/sf, document of 17th August, 1600.
- (27) AGS E617/232; Sarum xiv 256.

and for the rest of Elizabeth's reign the two sides were in sporadic contact. Everything possible was done to make Elizabeth come to terms; it was partly for this reason that the Irish expedition was considered so important (28). But just as military enterprises bore no fruit, neither did diplomacy. After her delegates' final offer at Boulogne, Elizabeth chose only to claim that the Dutch were not as amenable to the suggestion as had at first been thought. The Council were not surprised at the news. Like Zúñiga, they considered that Spain's deep involvement in the Saluzzo crisis was responsible for Elizabeth's coolness, since the threat posed to Spain by Henry IV's policy was working to her advantage (29). Although Zúñiga and Carrillo were ordered to do their best - always provided that they had due regard for Spain's reputation - in the event talks were not resumed. For the next two years, nothing more than the occasional letter was exchanged with England (30).

The peaceful accession of James I to the English throne in March, 1603, put a summary end to the indecisive policy that Spain had been forced to adopt towards Elizabeth. The news found the Council quite unprepared. With their military and diplomatic policies in ruins, no clear line of action commended itself to them: perhaps James could be persuaded to abjure Protestantism; perhaps Henry IV would join in an invasion of England; perhaps neither James nor Henry could be trusted (31). But whilst the Council advised caution until further information arrived, Philip decided to take matters into his own hands. His quarrel and that of his father had been with Elizabeth: towards James VI he was officially neutral, for although Scottish Protestantism was perhaps even more militant than that of England, war had never been declared between their two countries. There would therefore be no shame in appearing from the outset willing to discuss peace with

(28) qvs p. 145.

(29) AGS E617/110; E2023/3.

(30) AGS E2224<sup>2</sup>/68.

(31) AGS E2557/1.

James in his new capacity as Elizabeth's heir (32). Staying in Aranjuez with Lerma and Franqueza, and apparently with no other advisers nearer than Valladolid, Philip appointed an ambassador to James and furnished him with detailed instructions. As far as can be told, he was in possession of no more information than were his councillors, and he certainly made no reference to Aremberg's mission to London, news of which arrived in Valladolid on 27th April (33). The simple fact of James' accession sufficed. But apart from his decision to send an ambassador northwards, Philip was at bottom as confused as his Council. The man selected for the task was a complete stranger to affairs of state: Juan de Tasis, the royal postmaster-general, came from a respectable but undistinguished family that had held the office since the previous century. The choice was significant: Philip did not wish to commit himself by sending one of the great men of his kingdom to James. Most important of all, he did not even wish to commit himself in the eyes of his own councillors. Tasis was told to conceal the true purpose of his mission both at home and abroad, and only the Count of Miranda was to be let into the secret when Tasis passed through Valladolid. Special arrangements with the Treasury had to be made for him to collect the money necessary for the journey (34). In the first instance, he was to go to Flanders, ostensibly to discuss with Albert and Isabella the election of a King of the Romans in succession to Rudolph; and whilst there, he was to reveal that, having already set off for Brussels, he had received orders to proceed to England in order to give Philip's congratulations to James on the occasion of the latter's accession.

Tasis' instructions amply complemented the equivocal nature of his commission. His real task was indeed a mission to England, but he was ordered to take the situation as he found it. Philip had still not formally

(32) cf CSPV x 73.

(33) qvi p. 188.

(34) AGS E2571/10, 20.

given up his family's claim to the English throne, and he was as eager as ever to see that Elizabeth's successor was of acceptable religious views and one who would favour Spanish interests (35). It was still not clear how much resistance was being offered to James by his new subjects, and Philip wished to be prepared for every eventuality; he even thought it worthwhile to provide Tasis with a bland letter of introduction to, amongst others, Arbella Stuart (36). But he rightly assumed that James would be firmly installed, and his instructions to Tasis shew the lengths to which he was prepared to go in order to win the new monarch's friendship and goodwill. Whilst being watchful for the interests of the English and Irish recusants, Tasis was expressly ordered to tell them that peace would serve their interests better than war (37). To James, he was to stress the historic alliance between England and Spain, and the benefits that would come to him by renewing it - such as the possibility of reconquering those parts of France to which the English crown had long laid claim in just revenge for Henry IV's intrigue with Spain to prevent his accession (!), or the pacification of Ireland with the help of Spain's influence. And on the other hand, he was not to conceal the risks that James would run in rejecting Spain's friendship (38). A quid pro quo would, of course, be necessary.

(35) "Mi voluntad es que en Inglaterra (si ser puede) haya rey católico, a lo menos tal que deje público albedrío a los católicos con pública y descubierta libertad de conciencia y que sea buen amigo de esta corona y no se estreche más con Francia y restituya las plazas de Zelanda que tienen ingleses." BN 2347/70.

(36) AGS E2571/19.

(37) cf Philip's rider to the consulta of 21st April, in which he advised the stirring-up of the English and Irish recusants, though "sin daño suyo para la causa de religión y de la pacificación pública procediendo en ello con tanto tiento que no se puede juzgar que se prosigue la enemistad que se tuvo con la reina muerta." Internal evidence, notably Philip's suggestion that "una gran persona" be sent to Flanders and the fact that he gave a fairly detailed separate rejoinder to the Council's subsequent consulta of 29th April, suggests that the rider was written in the week following 21st April and therefore before Tasis' instructions were signed on 29th. AGS E2511/92, 93.

(38) "Sea bien que diestramente le hagáis entender las fuerzas de mar y tierra que había mandado antes de esta ocasión y la gallardía y pujanza de ellas y que mereciéndomelo las emplearé en su ayuda con que estará amparado de las ofensas que sus vecinos le quieren hacer y al contrario el daño que podría recibir de ellas." BN 2347/70.

As on previous occasions, Philip specified toleration for the recusants and the return of the cautionary towns as the two things that he most wished to gain. In no sense, therefore, was Tasis to go before James cap in hand, and indeed his real mission was to do no more than sound out the new king (39). Yet there can be little doubt that Philip already knew that he would have to come to terms with James. In conversations with Lerma and Franqueza before he left Aranjuez, Tasis was told that compared with the cost of the war, the purchasing of peace and the return of the cautionary towns would be cheap at any price (40).

The Council thus knew nothing of these developments when, on 29th April, they met to discuss the latest despatches from the Archduke Albert. For, although there might be vacillation in Valladolid, there was none in Brussels. As far as Albert and Isabella were concerned, their principal aim was to win the war against the Dutch; and the ending of hostilities with England was the first and most important step towards doing so. The news of Elizabeth's death therefore came to them as a relief. Admittedly, James was a Protestant: but he had succeeded to the position that the Habsburgs had felt had rightly belonged to his mother, Mary Stuart, "which shews", Isabella observed, "how her blood has cried out before our Lord;" and for reasons best known to herself, the Infanta took this as a sign that James' conversion was imminent. However, there were more prosaic and perhaps weightier reasons for making a friend of James. If England, Scotland, Denmark, the kingdom of James' father-in-law, were united with France, the United Provinces and the Protestant princes of Germany, the loyal Low Countries would be isolated in the middle of a power-bloc that was overwhelmingly Protestant and which could very easily be overwhelmingly anti-Habsburg. There was now therefore no

(39) BN 2347/70.

(40) AGS E 840/108.

chance of annulling James' accession, for those same allies would be quick to thwart any attempt to unseat him. Albert saw his duty as plain:

"I find it utterly necessary for the service of Your Majesty and the public good not to attempt at present other than to bring about a firm peace with him, for it is expected that a peace will greatly benefit Your Majesty's kingdoms and these provinces: and Your Majesty was prepared to attempt an agreement with the late Queen, who had given so much offence."

(tengo por forzoso y necesario para el servicio de VM y el bien público no tratar al presente de otra cosa sino encaminarlas todas a una paz muy fundada con él, pues se entiende redundará en muy gran beneficio de esos reinos y estos estados y VM la tenía por conveniente si se pudiera haber encaminado con la reina muerta que tanto tenía ofendido a VM.)

He had therefore taken two important steps on his own initiative. He had amended the proclamation on trade that had excluded English vessels from trade with Spain's European possessions; and he proposed to send at once an envoy to James in his own name and that of his wife. For Albert, the circumstances brooked no delay (41).

The Council's reaction was mixed. Although all expressed their regret that Albert wished to act so hastily, none wished to see his orders changed, nor was there any suggestion made that they had been forced into an unwelcome position by his actions. The truth was that they were glad of a lead. Albert had the strength of will that the Council lacked; at last, something positive was to be done, which could be amended and improved as necessary. Naturally, Philip would have to take great care of his reputation and not appear too eager for peace. But it was as Albert had said: if negotiations could be opened with Elizabeth, surely they could be opened with

(41) AGS E622/28,33; BRAH xlvii 413.

James (42). Despite this, the Council remained far more cautious than the King. For when, without having admitted any more than Miranda into his confidence, Philip replied to the consulta by noting, in the most general of terms, that James' previous attitude was sufficient grounds for opening closer relations with him (43), the Council felt some concern at this vague benevolence. It was almost as though Philip had temporarily forgotten what his position as the Catholic King demanded of him. The war with England had been called a religious war; Spain's main expressed aim had been to free the English recusants from the Protestant tyranny to which they were said to be subjected, and nothing should be done to allow the world to think that Spain had changed her mind. Hasty action seemed to the Council to bring with it two further dangers. In the first place, the terms of any treaty would be the worse for haste: the unsatisfactory nature of the agreement at Vervins was thought, four years after the event, to have been caused by the Habsburg deputies' excessive eagerness to end the war. In the second place, the Council expected that the situation within England would still be fluid. There might therefore be an opportunity for Philip to profit from the religious divisions there, for the "Protestants" (by which Anglicans was surely meant) and the Puritans were said to be at daggers drawn (44).

The Council's slow progress towards the position that Philip had long before reached was slightly hastened by more detailed news from Flanders.

(42) Most historians in the past have seen Albert and Isabella as forcing the pace in diplomatic matters, and being in large part responsible for the Treaty of London. In fact, as Albert's letter makes clear, he had no intention of taking matters into his own hands: he was merely making use of a golden opportunity to put into effect a policy that had already been agreed in principle. Isabella, too, was eager to stress that nothing had been or would be done without the fullest consultation with her brother Philip and his ministers. BRAH xlvi 427; cf Cuvelier, Carter Belgian Autonomy... *passim*.

(43) AGS E2511/93.

(44) AGS E2511/91.



After an initial contretemps, the mission of Escorza (45) had been an unqualified success; James was apparently as eager as Albert to be on friendly terms. When asked by Escorza to put an end to the raising of troops in Scotland for the United Provinces, James had given an eminently satisfactory reply: "je n'aime point ceux de Hollande ni leur cause, mais ne le dites à personne." Escorza had assured him that Albert wished to see him succeed Elizabeth without impediment; and since the assurance had been made at a particularly propitious time - just before the Queen's death - Albert felt with considerable justification that James was more likely than ever to welcome peace proposals (46). The information was welcomed in the Council, not least by Miranda. Constrained by his full knowledge that Philip had taken matters into his own hands - rashly, as he thought - and his duty to keep silence on the matter in the Council, he was glad to be able to say that, since James was so well-disposed, some discreet person might be sent on Philip's behalf to congratulate him on his accession. His colleagues, however, still unaware of the true state of affairs, were less enthusiastic: James for them was by no means wholly trustworthy (47).

On one point, however, the Council was certain: the use of force was now out of the question. In a meeting held on 22nd July, the two opposing policies of peace or war were finally discussed at length. The English exiles, for whose interests Spain had long protested deep concern, were continuing to press for a military expedition against England (48). They alleged that the situation completely favoured this course. James was very short of money, in a strange realm, full of diffidence and justly afraid of the many factions that were hostile to him. Their appeal did not lack

(45) qvs p. 172 seq.

(46) AGS E622/42,47,48.

(47) AGS E2511/90. Just over a week later, the Council finally, but still cautiously, decided to advise Philip to send an envoy to Flanders "que si de la otra parte moviera plática de acuerdo y confederación, pudiera tratar de ello con la inteligencia y autoridad que la materia requiere." AGS E840/49.

(48) qvs p. 140 ; Loomie Guy Fawkes passim.

strongly emotive language:

"This is the last mission that the Catholics can send to Spain, and all they ask is for His Majesty (in whom, under God, they have placed their hopes) to say whether he can help them with the aid that he has promised for this spring. They want to know all that His Majesty intends as soon as possible, so that they may be able to conform themselves as much as possible: for their own decisions about whether or not to do certain important things depends upon certain information of what they can expect here.

Many of the most important men of the kingdom - not only Catholics but others as well - have declared so much their opposition to King James that there can be no backing down; and so, even if all the Catholic princes desert them, they will unquestionably depose him on their own, and we trust to God to turn again to His own cause ... They are clear that it is far better honourably to risk their lives in the just defence of their religion and with the hope of success that the occasion offers them, rather than to allow themselves to be haled before the executioner and one by one have their heads cut on some feigned pretext of treason or lèse-majesté. And as I have said, this applies not only to the principal Catholics but also to many Protestants, and especially to those who are of royal blood, their friends and allies."

(ésta es la postrera embajada que los católicos pueden enviar a España y piden sólo la respuesta de SM (en que después de Dios tienen puesta su esperanza) si les puede ayudar con los socorros prometidos para esta primavera, y desean saber la voluntad de SM en todo con la brevedad que el caso pide con propósito de seguirla en cuanto les fuere posible pues de la noticia cierta de lo que pueden esperar de acá dependen sus resoluciones de hacer a dejar de hacer algunas cosas importantes... Muchos de los más principales del reino no solo católicos sino otros también se han declarado tanto de ser sus contrarios que no hay más lugar de volver atrás así que aunque todos los príncipes católicos les desamparasen es lanza forzosa que ellos por sí solos le procuren echar por usurpador y confiamos que Dios volverá por su causa ... Así que han resuelto que es mucho mejor de aventurar sus vidas honradamente en justa defensa de su religión con la esperanza de próspero suceso que la ocasión les ofrece que dejándola pasar dejarse sacar al matadero y

degollar uno después otro con achaques y fingidos títulos de traiciones y lesa magestad y esto no toca sólo como digo a los principales católicos sino a muchos protestantes y especialmente a los que tienen deudo y sangre real y sus aliados y amigos (49). )

Two further memoranda supported the self-styled representatives of the English recusants. The first, sent by a correspondent in London, was a copy of James' declaration of his Protestant faith, first published in 1580 and now re-issued on his arrival in England. The second was a report from Tasis, by this time in Brussels, that the recusants were offering to raise 12,000 men if only Spain would send them the same number of ducats (50). But in marked contrast to this bellicosity was a holograph letter from the Pope to Philip, dated 2nd June. In it Clement, although protesting that he would lean heavily upon the King's advice, urged Philip to take advantage of a great opportunity to bring peace to Christendom. Force had been tried over many years, and with indifferent success; its only effect had been, he alleged, to damage the recusant interest in England. Everything seemed to depend upon ending the war, not only Spain's interests - though the Pope astutely mentioned the Indies and the Low Countries - but that of all Europe: the Turk was once more threatening Italy. He even professed himself ready to go in person to England and, if necessary, to martyrdom, in order to regain that country's obedience (51). Information from Tasis seemed to lend weight to the Pope's point of view. He was given to understand that James' wife was a secret Roman Catholic. It was also being said that English and Scots alike were eager to satiate their greed with Spanish gold, and that even James would, for a consideration, agree to some sort of temporary truce; 500,000 or 600,000 ducats judiciously distributed would in Tasis' opinion have far more effect than money given to English dissidents (52).

(49) AGS E840/129.

(50) AGS E840/225.

(51) AGS E840/191, 192.

(52) AGS E840/108, 119.

The choice was by no means an easy one for Philip and his advisers. The recusants' memorandum appealed directly to Spain's deep sense of religious militarism, and James' proclamation gave it further justification. Was it right to turn away the English recusants? Was it right to compromise with a Protestant? As the royal confessor pointed out in no uncertain terms, King Exekiel had merely shewn the temple treasures to Nebuchadnezzar and had incurred God's wrath: what risks, then, did Spain run?

"A confession so abominable as that made by the King of Scotland - one moreover that he wishes to exact from all his subjects - cannot but arouse a lively emotion in Your Majesty's royal and Christian breast, and make Your Majesty, duly remembering the many blessings received at God's hand, oppose the words and works of so obstinate a heretic: bearing in mind the proper fear that, if you do not defend God's honour, He will not defend Your Majesty's. I am afraid that the chastisement that we have suffered in the past was perhaps for not having gone to the help and defence of the English Catholics when there was most opportunity. We must be very careful about making friends with an obstinate heretic."

(es fuerza que él obre en el real y cristiano pecho de VM tierno sentimiento de una confesión tan abominable como la que el rey de Inglaterra ha hecho y quiere que hagan sus súbditos y que con santo celo acordándose VM de tantos beneficios como ha recibido de la divina mano se oponga a las palabras y obras de tan rebelde y pertinaz hereje teniendo presente el justo temor de que si VM no defiende la honra de Dios se desobligará el devolver por la de VM y teme que por ventura fueron los castigos pasados por no haber acudido cuando hubo más oportunidad al amparo y defensa de aquellos católicos y se debe mirar mucho como se trata de amistad llana con un hereje pertinaz.)

But despite his impassioned polemic, even Córdoba was forced to agree with his colleagues. Philip was "defensor de la fe" and would be justified in invading England if his forces were adequate. Since they patently were not, he should look to negotiation; and this, even more than the Pope's opinion, was to be the deciding factor. The two most influential councillors, Idiáquez and Lerma, were in entire agreement. The former enunciated the two

basic errors that were to have so striking an effect upon Spain's policy towards James: the first, that James was, like all Protestants, "más político y estadista que religioso" and as such was readily influenced in religious matters; the second - admittedly slightly less gross - was that "the English have always been prepared to sell themselves for gain" and that 200,000 or 300,000 ducats spent by Tasis might be enough to buy toleration for the recusants (53). Lerma concurred: until James expressly declared himself the enemy of Roman Catholicism, Philip III was under no obligation to declare war on him (54).

Further encouragement to adopt this course now came thick and fast. Albert reported that his envoy Aremberg, who had arrived in London on 18th July, had found the English willing to come to terms (55). The same opinion was given by an English exile of Italian origin, Dr. Robert Taylor, who during the course of an unofficial visit of his own to London, had spoken to the Earl of Cumberland, the Countess of Suffolk and the Secretary Lake about toleration for the recusants. They had told him that £50,000 (Lake said £100,000) would buy toleration for Roman Catholics in London. It appeared that a strong majority in the Privy Council was in favour of continuing the war: but Lake alleged that many could be pacified with bribes, and Cumberland even offered to win over Sir Robert Cecil himself by this means (56). Of still greater importance was the private audience granted to Taylor by five members of the Privy Council, allegedly including Cecil, Suffolk and Lord Henry Howard, in which once more he was told that the majority was in favour of the war. Two days later, however, he was seen by two of the five who, on behalf of their small group, offered a

(53) Significantly, Idiáquez was prepared to spend up to 400,000 ducats on buying back the Dutch cautionary towns.

(54) AGS E2511/79.

(55) Cuvelier 291 seqq.

(56) AGS E622/84; Loomie Toleration and Diplomacy 17 seqq.

return to the religious status quo of the thirteenth year of Elizabeth's reign (57) and its confirmation under the Great Seal: for, even if the King wished it, he could not repeal the recusancy laws without the consent of Parliament, and his word would have to be sufficient (58). Albert was enthusiastic. Having sent Taylor back to England, furnished with a vague and semi-official set of instructions written on Albert's behalf in the third person, he urged Philip to think about sending northwards some great personage who would be better fitted than Tasis to conduct the negotiations that seemed increasingly likely to come about (59). For entirely different reasons, a far less enthusiastic Tasis was advising the same course. He had few illusions about the difficulties that any negotiator would face: his conversations with Richardot and others had, amongst other things, revealed that England would almost certainly insist upon freedom of trade with the Indies (60). But he had heard that the English recusants, finally despairing of Spain's help, had sent a Jesuit to Rome to offer their allegiance to the Duke of Parma in the hope that he would come to their rescue. And above all, Tasis was deeply concerned about what Aremberg was doing and saying in London; for although the latter's contacts with English statesmen were unofficial, he appeared to be discussing matters - for instance, money - that were far in excess of his mandate. Albert, when this was pointed out to him, merely urged Tasis not to delay his departure for London (61).

As these despatches were read in the session of 24th July, the last traces of bellicosity almost entirely disappeared from the Council. War might be the most reputable means of achieving Spain's ends, but there was

(57) XIII Elizabethae I cap. ii, An Act against the bringing in, and putting in Execution of Bulls, Writings or Instruments and other Superstitious Things from the See of Rome prescribed the penalty as for High Treason for those who imported papal bulls, and that as for Praemunire for those who imported devotional objects - crosses, rosaries and the like - from Rome.

(58) "y en lo demás el Rey daría su palabra de usar conviencia y que ellos empeñarían su fe y sus honras por el restante." AGS E622/224.

(59) AGS E622/82, 83.

(60) qvs p. 136 seqq.

(61) AGS E840/173

no evidence to suggest that Spanish troops would be successful in England, and the state of the Treasury did not allow Spain the self-indulgence of unnecessary military operations, the more so since there now seemed every chance that negotiations were feasible. Even Córdoba could not dodge the fact; as he was to say to his colleagues some nine months later,

"Your Majesty needs peace much more than does the King of England, both because your monarchy is so much greater and the obligations that it brings with it consequently heavier, and because Your Majesty can count upon no allies, whereas the King of England can look for many. If war breaks out, it is clear that all will join against Your Majesty, and in such a case we cannot be sure of being able to resist such a weight of opposition, seeing what the English and the Dutch have been able to do to the state of Your Majesty's Treasury. If we cannot resist the onslaught and the forces of enemies so many and so great, it cannot be doubted that the state will be placed in obvious danger."

(la paz conviene mucho más a VM que al rey de Inglaterra así porque cuanto mayor es la monarquía de VM mayores son sus obligaciones como porque VM no tendrá ninguna ayuda y aquel rey tendrá muchas... Si se rompe la guerra está claro que todos se juntarán contra VM y en tal caso no se sabe como se pueda resistir a tan gran potencia viendo lo que han hecho ingleses y rebeldes y el estado en que se halla la hacienda de VM... Si no se puede oponer al ímpetu y fuerza de tantos y tan poderosos enemigos es sin duda que...se pondrá a manifiesto peligro el estado (62). )

This being the case, the Council was eager to point out that there was no disgrace in opening talks, and even less in buying for the recusants the toleration that Philip wanted - only in selling it. Spain could adopt the easier and cheaper course with a clear conscience. So firm was this conviction that negotiation had come to be regarded as the only way in which they could envisage helping the recusants if in fact the latter decided to rebel against James. In such an unlikely - not to say unwelcome - event, Tasis could ask Philip's advice, help the insurgents with money and act

as mediator between them and the authorities. In no way ought Tasis to foment discord in England. As for the reported recusant offer of 30,000 men, Olivares, the councillor who had so strongly argued for a positive policy over the succession only a few months before, concluded that they would be a band of malcontent ragamuffins and not real soldiers. Philip was forced to agree. He, like his Council, was undoubtedly uneasy about his sense of obligation towards the recusants - hence his unusual step in interrupting a session of the Council in order to ask their opinion of the quantity and nature of the help that he ought to give them. But in the end, he had to be content with the new policy. Tasis was to be ordered to distribute 100,000 ducats amongst the recusants, but only if he could do so secretly; and the exiles who had come to Valladolid to send memoranda to Philip should be given his good wishes and 2,000 ducats for their trouble, but no firm undertaking. Otherwise, Spain's money would be used to buy peace (63).

Yet the balance was still delicate. For all the factors in favour of making peace, the decision had not been easily reached, and little was needed to reveal how brittle Philip and his Council felt about coming to terms with James. Such an impulse was to come, ironically, from Rome. Sesa's reports shewed that the Pope was disgracefully lukewarm about James' Protestantism, and that current opinion in the curia regarded Persons and the English Jesuits "as lepers" simply on account of their friendship with Spain. Sesa was free in his condemnation:

"We live at a time when the order of the day is to temporize with politique and heretic so as not to lose the scant religion of the former and not to give the latter an occasion of hardening his heart."

(estamos en tiempo que la lectura que acá se lleva es contemporizar con los políticos y con los herejes para no acabar de perder la poca religión de los primeros y dar ocasión a endurecerse a los otros.)



These further indications that the Pope could not be depended upon were unwelcome though not unexpected. It was infinitely galling that Clement should play down the great issues of the day and yet be prepared to wrangle incessantly with the Spanish authorities in Italy over petty jurisdictional disputes. But for all the strong language and the lingering desire to be able to do something more positive about the situation in England, all that could be done was to order Sesa to make the appropriate representations with the Pope (64). Not even great annoyance enabled Philip and the Council to forget that they had no choice but to negotiate, even though in the same session further demands from the recusants were discussed (65). With a heavy heart, they allowed necessity to triumph over a deep-seated sense of principle; and by mid-August they were hoping that the recusants could be persuaded to keep out of trouble (66).

Until now, the opening of negotiations with James had been regarded as a pis aller. The situation changed dramatically with the terrifying news that France and England had concluded a new alliance. Juan Bautista de Tasis, after sending many a verbose despatch from Paris, had finally done his country a great service. As a result of his friendship with an un-named confidant of Henry IV and his circle, he had been able to obtain detailed knowledge of the fruits of Rosny's mission to London. The old treaty between France and Scotland was confirmed and its terms extended to include England. The two monarchs were henceforth to be bound in an alliance of offence and defence. Most sinister of all, they had apparently agreed to recognize a peace settlement in Flanders by which the Dutch would recognize the nominal suzerainty of Spain and England and France guarantee to protect them from Spanish reprisals. If such a settlement proved impossible to reach, Henry and James were agreed to send subsidies to their allies - the

(64) AGS E1857/11; E977/sf, document of 1st July, 1603.

(65) AGS E841/231.

(66) AGS E2511/75.

former with 100,000 ducats a year and the latter with 4,000 men. If Spain should declare war upon England, France would come to the rescue with 6,000 troops and the immediate repayment of the debt that Henry owed to Elizabeth (67). Tasis was not entirely certain that all the information was correct: it seemed that James was not playing the French game with much eagerness, and the French were said to be doubtful that the agreement would be put into effect (68). But the significance was clear enough. And from England itself had come unwelcome news of another sort: the Bye plot had been discovered and nipped in the bud (69). There could now be no question of hesitation. All the evidence shewed that Tasis' proper place was in London: after all, by promptly sending his own ambassador to James, Henry IV had been able to steal a march on the Habsburgs (70). From this point there was to be no turning back: Spain would have to come to terms with England.

- (67) AGS EK1606/71. The information substantially tallies with the version of the agreement printed in Dumont V ii 30 with the date 30th July, 1603.
- (68) AGS EK1606/70, 82.
- (69) Gardiner i 119.
- (70) AGS E8334/145; EK1606/93.

IX. PRIORITIES BECOME CLEARER.

Juan de Tasis arrived in England on 31st August, 1603, and was soon to receive a new title - Count of Villamediana - bestowed upon him presumably in order to give him greater standing at the English court (1). From the first, he was impressed with the many factors that seemed to be working in his favour. His first view of Dover Castle came as a pleasant surprise: it was so ruined that, in his opinion, it could not be defended for an hour - and this was true of all the other fortified places in the vicinity. The English boasted that the strength of their defences lay not in their castles and their troops - the latter being in a similarly bad state - but in their fleet of 70 vessels: but Villamediana thought that only between 35 and 40 of these could belong to the Crown. The populace seemed poor and down-trodden, and Villamediana's inevitable conclusion was that "the day they have to go to war, they will have scant skill and abundant disorder at their disposition." (2) By comparison with that of the Spanish government, the English budget made unimpressive reading: according to reports, James could reckon on receiving 1,130,000 ducats (£380,000) each year, a sum that included Parliamentary grants, of which 450,000 ducats would be consumed in ordinary expenses and what remained would have to be divided amongst the Fleet, presents, graces and extraordinary expenses (3). The fact had not been lost upon James, and already he was said to be making considerable and unsuccessful attempts to raise more money. The new king obviously badly needed peace.

Indeed, James cut a far from warlike figure: beati pacifici was significantly his personal motto. Apart from once harbouring a slight doubt, Villamediana was always sure that he was timorous and feared war more than

(1) BRAH xlviii 427.

(2) AGS E841/141.

(3) AGS E840/189.

he desired peace (4). There was not much to fear from a buffoon:

"The more I come closer to meeting this king, the less I am pleased by what I hear about him, for all agree in describing a man of little substance, timid - some say feminine - and simply for this a lover of peace with everyone, inconstant, without the least kingliness, a pleasure-lover, an enemy to affairs of state, which tire him and which are therefore left entirely in the hands of that man Cecil, so that he himself can forever be out hunting (to which he is partial). He never speaks or acts regally and lacks temperance - they say that on the day of his coronation, he drank thirty-five times and assuredly did not rise from the table sober, but rather so merry that the Queen hurried to take him in hand. Even worse things are attributed to him. Your Majesty will be able to judge from this what may be expected from so godless a man. Although the King has the reputation of being a theologian and man of letters, we can see how vain is his theology. They say that he does not even know how to be generous."

(cuanto más me acerco a este rey menos me agradan las relaciones que me llegan de su persona porque conferidas concuerdan todas en ser hombre de poco porque le hacen tímido y tal que diga que como una mujer y por sólo esto amigo de paz con todos inconstante sin palabra de rey en nada amigo del ocio enemigo del gobierno y que le canse y que así lo deja absolutamente en manos de este Cicel por sólo acudir de ordinario a la caza, que es inclinado y en ella y en otras partes decompuesto de palabras y actos reales y poco sobrio pues dicen que el día de su coronación bebió 35 veces que según esto no se levantó triste de la tabla antes tan alegre que la reina se dió prisa a recogerle y aún le imputan de cosas peores que según esto puede VM juzgar lo que de hombre semejante y sin Dios se puede esperar... y aunque a este rey le hacen letrado y teólogo ya se ve cuan falsa teología es y aún la liberalidad se dice que usa mal... (5). )

Although time was to soften Villamediana's harsh judgement in some respects, he continued to regard James as a pacifist. In public and in private, the King never appeared to be other than entirely in favour of peace with Spain, and throughout Villamediana's stay expressed a firm desire "not for peace for a year but one that is durable and will last for centuries." (6) As a

(4) AGS E840/184, 264.

(5) AGS E841/141.

(6) AGS E840/253, 259; E842/90, 91, 92.

token of this, and in full accord with his political theory, he openly disapproved of the rebel Dutch (7). He was not prepared to help Spain against them, but he asserted that if they refused to come to terms at the same time as England, he would not feel obliged to support them further. He could not stand by and see them punished: but as a monarch fully conscious of his divine office, he could not but look askance at the United Provinces and did not doubt that an alliance with a fellow monarch of Philip's standing was far more fitting for him (8). Encouraging too was his refusal to enter the French camp. He was already known to have been reluctant to accede to Henry IV's schemes, and was little liked in Paris (9). He even publicly numbered Normandy, Aquitaine and Guyenne amongst his possessions in a speech before Parliament in the spring of 1604 (10). There was yet another aspect to his desire for peace: James had begun to see himself as the arbiter of Europe.

"The King has become so proud with the great attention paid him by Your Majesty and other monarchs that he has got the idea that all this comes of necessity. They encourage him to think that he and his ministers have in their hand universal peace or discord and war throughout the world."

(Este rey es tan soberbio con el gran caso que VM y otros reyes han hecho de él y de su amistad que con eso le han puesto en cabeza que sea por necesidad y le tienen tan ancho que piense él y sus ministros que la paz pública y universal del mundo o la discordia y la guerra esté en su mano... (11). )

In court circles, too, Villamediana found encouraging signs of goodwill. Although as he himself pointed out, "this is a kingdom into which no Spaniard has openly entered for thirty years," he was not short of friends (12). Information about the reputed sympathies of leading English

(7) CSPV x 55. James' The Trew Law of Free Monarchies was published in 1599.

(8) AGS E840/254.

(9) AGS EK1606/124; qvs

(10) AGS E842/90, 91, 92.

(11) AGS E840/152.

(12) AGS E842/140.

statesmen had been available to the Spaniards for some time. One of the most curious pieces concerned the son of Buckhurst, the Lord High Treasurer, who as a young Roman Catholic convert had visited Rome early in 1603: here was proof that the recusant interest had permeated the highest circles in England (13). More detailed was a relation given to Villamediana before he left Flanders, which purported to describe the allegiance of the entire Privy Council and some of the other leading men. Egerton, Buckhurst, Worcester, Fortescue, Wootton, Northumberland, Cumberland and Mountjoy were all expected to be favourable towards Spain, though Cecil and his friends were not (14). And in reality, Villamediana found that the situation at court was not as bad as he had expected it to be. There was admittedly a sizeable core of opponents, made up, he thought, of those who saw their personal fortunes to depend upon the continuance of privateering. But gradually, he was winning popularity, and that without distributing bribes. There was a good deal of expectancy, it was true: as the Constable of Castile was later to remark, "las esperanzas en que están son terribles." (15) Yet this English cupidity was throughout regarded as one of Spain's best assets. Never for one moment did Villamediana think that there might be more to English attitudes than money and self-interest; high principles were a Spanish prerogative.

For all the surface good-will, however, James and his ministers were playing a very deep game. In the Privy Council and in Parliament, there was opposition to a peace with the national enemy. The contrast between James' sugar and the Privy Council's occasional vinegar was therefore deliberate: the King could blame any stringencies in the terms of the treaty upon his scapegoat ministers, who in turn could plead the awkwardness of the Parliamentary gentry. James' astuteness is to be seen above all in his

(13) AGS E977/sf, document of 13th March, 1603.

(14) AGS E840/118.

(15) AGS E841/98.

religious policy. Without compromising himself in his capacity as titular head of the English Church, he contrived to shew himself to be not unfavourable to Roman Catholicism. He had sent James Lindsey to the Pope with a courteous reply to the latter's letter, assuring him of his cordiality and open-mindedness to theological debate (16). In a speech delivered at the opening of Parliament in the spring of 1604, he spoke of his warm desire for a fully-representative General Council of the Church, and, from Spain's point of view best of all, of the need to distinguish between the seditious seminary priest and the loyal recusant layman (17). They were small steps, perhaps, but enough to convince Villamediana that James might be more open to Spain's religious demands than had been Elizabeth. Above all, the Queen, as a Roman Catholic convert, was wholly favourable to the Spanish interest. She was in contact with the Pope; she smiled upon Villamediana from the first; she even went so far as to confide in him her desire to marry her eldest son to the Infanta, and that she had secretly arranged for him to be tutored by a Roman Catholic. On one occasion, indeed, she made a pointed reference to the facial likeness between the Prince and Henry V at his coronation in Paris, and expressed the hope that history might repeat itself (18). Only on one occasion was James reported to have objected to his wife's meddling in public affairs: for the rest, it was assumed that he was fully aware of what she said and did and that he therefore had no objection to raise (19). It is indeed odd that neither Villamediana nor the Council of State seem to have doubted for a moment that James' intentions were radiantly clear. Nevertheless, these reports went far to encourage Spain to hold to her course, and even to have sanguine hopes of successfully concluding a favourable treaty.

(16) AGS E841/185; E978/17, 18.

(17) AGS E842/90, 91, 92. The same distinction was made in his proclamation of 22nd February, 1603/4 OS; E842/3.

(18) AGS E840/144, 145, 146, 188; E841/155; E842/61.

(19) AGS E840/152.

Pressure from Rome and Paris continued to incline the Spanish authorities towards peace. The Pope, whilst resisting pressure from certain English exiles to send a nuncio to London, tried not to frighten James away. His policy was to maintain unofficial contact, above all with the Queen (20). More positive, however, were the steps that he took to discourage the recusants from resorting to arms. From three sources - Tasis in London, the Constable of Castile in Brussels and Zúñiga in Paris - the Council of State learnt that the Pope had spoken unequivocally in favour of the new king. The Constable, indeed, was able to send to Valladolid a copy of the letter sent on behalf of the Flemish nuncio to the Archpriest, George Blackwell, in which plots against the "sacred person" of James were denounced as "irreligious, scandalous and offensive before God" and in which patient endurance of any persecution was enjoined (21). In large measure, the Pope's policy was undoubtedly still determined by his desire not to offend Henry IV; for Henry badly wished to be sure of James' friendship. He had attempted to conclude an offensive and defensive alliance. He had suggested that James marry his daughter to the Dauphin (22). He was, moreover, deeply suspicious of Spain's plans in England. He could not believe that Philip wanted no more than peace with James: surely he would seek English help for further projects against France. He saw the English seminary priests as Spain's greatest allies, and for this reason ordered his ambassador to warn James of the activities of this fifth column (23). Joining with the Florentines and the Venetians, he and his ministers did all they could to place obstacles in Spain's way (24). Large sums of money were distributed on Henry's behalf at the English court, and with a good deal of publicity;

- (20) The policy, however, was not entirely successful. In February, 1604, he sent reliquaries and rosaries to England - though ostensibly they came from the Cardinals Aldobrandino and Datario - at the hands of the adventurer, Sir Anthony Standen. Apparently, James took great offence and in a fury sent Standen back to Italy. AGS E842/75; E978/14, 17.
- (21) AGS E840/139; E842/137, 139; EK1606/124. The letter to Blackwell was dated 15th August, 1603 OS.
- (22) AGS E840/188.
- (23) LM vi 175.
- (24) AGS E840/148; E842/137.



and it seemed that attempts were being made to displace Spain in the confidence of the English recusants (25). Any artifice seemed permissible: early in 1604, a bemused Juan Bautista de Tasis reported that "un gran matemático francés" had warned James that he would run great physical risk in the month of February (26). Henry's progress could not be allowed to continue unchecked.

Even so, Philip and the Council refused to rush in; they had severely criticized the Treaty of Vervins for having been conducted with too much haste in the early stages, and had no intention of repeating the mistake. A courtesy-envoy of some standing had been sent to a newly-crowned monarch with whom there had been no previous quarrel, and for a long time they continued to think that this was quite sufficient. But as Albert had pointed out, Villamediana for all his qualities was not experienced enough to be left in charge of so delicate a negotiation. The Council therefore decided to give the task to one of their own number, the Constable of Castile, who was sent to Flanders late in 1603 with a dual commission: to act as Albert's aide-de-camp and to supervise Villamediana's activities. He was an obvious choice. As a former Governor of Milan and Captain-General of the Spanish army in France in 1588, he had extensive military experience; his term as ambassador in Rome had introduced him to the niceties of diplomacy; and his mother, Lady Jane Dormer, was an English Roman Catholic who had met her husband at the court of Queen Mary (27). He could therefore be expected to be watchful for Spain's interests and alive to the need to gain concessions for the recusants.

(25) AGS E842/79, 134, 136.

(26) AGS EK1606/129.

(27) Loomie Spanish Elizabethans cap iv. I cannot agree with Dr. Loomie's opinion that the Constable was either less in favour of peace with England, or chosen for the mission for that reason; cf idem Toleration and Diplomacy 28.

The Constable's first task was fundamental to the entire negotiation: it was he who was to decide when and where to begin the talks (28). His first wish was to persuade the English to meet the Spaniards somewhere in the Low Countries - for England neutral ground because of the Archdukes' sovereignty and for Spain Habsburg territory where English guests could be granted precedence without jeopardizing Spanish honour (29). James, however, thought otherwise. He was unimpressed by pleas that the Constable, whom Villamediana mendaciously reported to be in bad health, be spared the journey across the Channel. At the end of January a deputation of five of his Privy Councillors - Nottingham, Devonshire, Henry Howard, Cecil and Northumberland - spent three hours with Villamediana, insisting that, since James and Anne were the strongest supporters of a treaty with Spain, the negotiations had better take place under their eye. The point was made with some skill: when four of the five had already taken their leave, the one who remained kissed a crucifix in token of his religious sympathies, told the ambassador that at least three of his colleagues were well-disposed towards Spain - and urged him not to insist upon treating in Flanders (30). Within a couple of months, James had also begun to say that he badly needed all his ministers at home to deal with the current session of Parliament (31). This, coupled with England's rising opinion of herself as the arbiter of Christendom, posed a great problem to the Constable. On the one hand, his sense of decency was outraged - "it would be only right for that King to send his delegates to Spain:" but on the other, he could not disregard the contrary factors. A man by no means given to exaggeration or panic, he had come to have a lively appreciation of why the Archdukes had at times seemed over-anxious for peace. In a letter written soon after his arrival in Brussels,

(28) AHN E2798/5.

(29) AGS E842/135.

(30) AGS E842/140. Of the five, only Northumberland was said to be francophile.

(31) AGS E841/9, 20; E842/73.

he painted a vivid picture of the state of the Low Countries:

"It has pained me considerably to see the army here, and although I had heard a good deal, I must confess to Your Majesty that I did not expect that the general discontent in all quarters, the notable lack of resources and the total decay of discipline would be so bad. There is no-one, great or small, who does not want to get out and does not expect that we shall be defeated. The Archduke does what he can, but his lack of means and his wish to satisfy his subjects prevent him from shewing it. Don Agustín Mesía assures me that if the enemy were to besiege the castle of Antwerp, there are not the munitions and supplies to allow it to last out ten days. Ghent and all the rest are the same. There are not the troops to attend to ordinary guard duties - I saw the Cambrai garrison so depleted it was pitiful - and they tell me that since this wretched siege of Ostend was begun - the ruin of everything - and many troops thus redeployed, the soldiers do not undress except to change their shirts (always supposing that they are amongst those who have them to change)."

(hame lastimado mucho ver este ejército y aunque había oído harto confieso a VM que no me persuadía a tanto daño; el descontento general de las naciones y la pobreza es notable, la disciplina y obediencia acabada de todo punto; no hay grande ni chico que no desee salir de aquí y que no esté desconfiado de buen suceso. El sr Archiduque hace lo que puede mas la falta de hacienda y el desear dar satisfacción al país no deja que luzga. Asegúrame Don Agustín Mesía que si el enemigo sitiase el castillo de Anveres no tiene municiones ni comida para sustentarse diez días: así está Gante y así está todo, y sin gente para hacer las guardias ordinarias; vi la guarnición de Cambray tan apocada que es lástima y entendí que desde que se sitió este negro Ostende (ruina de todo) y se sacó para eso mucha gente de ella no se desnudan los soldados sino para mudar camisa él que la tiene (32). )

He reported that, although Spain was sending 200,000 ducats a month to the war-effort, another monthly 150,000 would be needed. Within another fortnight, he wrote to tell that the Dutch had walked into the territory around

Maestrich "as though into their own house" and that "our reputation decays, and theirs increases, by the hour, and we may properly have great fears for the spring." (33) The Constable was therefore doubly anxious to end the war with England. He was forced to the conclusion that, if the English were obstinate in their wish to conduct the talks in London, Spain would have to give way: it was not worth throwing away the chance of repairing Spain's shattered resources for what would amount to a Pyrrhic victory (34). He took very seriously the talk about a match between the Prince of Wales and the Infanta, and saw it as a sure earnest of James' good intentions. He also saw the force behind the argument that the English negotiators were better kept where James would be able to control them. And a final consideration had to be borne in mind. By all accounts, the Flemings would need the closest supervision if it came to a treaty. Villamediana had noted with some surprise on his arrival in London that Aremberg had on his own initiative begun to make unofficial offers to the English. Perhaps because it was felt that Aremberg's actions had been instrumental in arousing England's desire to negotiate, neither Villamediana nor the Council of State took the matter further (35). But some compensatory action had to be taken, and neither Villamediana nor the Constable was disposed to trust any of Albert's ministers (36). The sooner that the negotiations were put on a formal footing, the better.

Without waiting for instructions from Spain, therefore, late in March, 1604, the Constable set off from Brussels for the coast, whence he could more easily maintain daily contact with Villamediana. For the moment, he himself was not to cross to England, for the excuse of ill-health with which

(33) AGS E842/137.

(34) AGS E842/76: "si los ingleses estuviesen obstinados en este punto no sé si convendría romper por eso siendo tan necesario como es al estado presente de las fuerzas y hacienda de VM tomar un poco de aliento."

(35) AGS E841/141; E622/223.

(36) AGS E842/137, 74.

Villamediana had long been pacifying James had now become a reality. But he sent on ahead three colleagues for his junior: two Flemings, the President Richardot and the Audiencier Verreyken, and an acute Milanese senator, Alessandro Robida, who would be Villamediana's main aide. The four were furnished with powers to begin discussions and orders to keep in close contact with the Constable. Latin and French were to be the linguae francae, Robida being proficient in the former and Villamediana's uncle, Juan Bautista de Tasis (not the former ambassador in France) in the latter (37). The Constable proposed to wait until the negotiations had ended before joining the rest of the envoys. Not only would it be more decorous for him to appear only to sign the final draft of the treaty: if for any reason the talks should break down, the world should be left with the impression that the inexperienced and obscure Villamediana had been in charge of the Habsburg legation (38). The Constable's sense of urgency was not shared by his fellow-councillors in Valladolid. Far removed as they were from the misery that prevailed in Flanders, they held to their opinion that time was Spain's best ally and that if once the English caught the idea that Spain badly wanted peace, they would make impossible demands. There were even those who opposed the Constable's leaving Brussels; in the opinion of the Marquess of Poza, the financial situation was so bad that only bluff would serve Spain's turn (39). But however unwelcome the Constable's decision to take matters into his own hands had been, they were forced to make the best of it. Córdoba, who had formerly been the strongest opponent of compromise, put the matter in a nutshell: if Spain, by not reducing her commitments, suffered defeat after defeat, her reputation would suffer far more than would have been the case if the Constable's actions had been approved. Realism had vanquished the Council's previous ideas of reputation, and had

(37) AGS E841/21,30; E842/76,94,95.

(38) AGS E2024/85; Alcocer ii 50.

(39) AGS E2557/12; E2571/57.

left the most lukewarm of ideologies: "true reputation consists in getting one's way, even though a certain amount be risked in the manner of negotiation." (40) The negotiations were to shew that even this was pitched too high.

Richardot, Verreyken and Robida arrived in England on 19th May, 1604, and the negotiations began shortly afterwards in Somerset House; and from the start, much to the chagrin of their Flemish colleagues, matters were firmly in the hands of the Spaniards (41). There were to be three main issues: trade, the cautionary towns held by England in the United Provinces, and religion. The first was an obvious point. Villamediana, indeed, in keeping with his belief that the English were materialists at heart, felt this to be the main reason for England's desire for peace (42). In the early months of the new reign there had been some encouraging mutual concessions. English privateering had been forbidden by royal proclamation, some English prisoners were repatriated, and Villamediana was empowered to issue passports to those English merchants who wished to waste no time in trading with Spain (43). In the resumption of normal commercial relations there were, however, two main difficulties. The first was England's objection to the activities of the Inquisition in Spanish ports (44). There had been a good deal of trouble in the past, and there were usually a number of English seamen in the cells of the Inquisition, although the evidence suggests that they were not treated with excessive severity (45). The Council of State did not take an extreme position. As early as the abortive negotiations at Boulogne, the Inquisitor-General and his council

(40) AGS E2557/15.

(41) Cuvelier 505: "ils se sont montrés nos maîtres plutôt que nos compagnons..."

(42) AGS E840/262. James' instructions to his commissioners shew that Villamediana had judged rightly: PRO SP 94/10/25.

(43) AGS E2557/5; E840/249; E841/158.

(44) This was the second point made in James' instructions: PRO SP 94/10/25.

(45) cf Alberti & Wallis-Chapman.

had said that they would not take unreasonably harsh measures against visiting Protestants, although they reserved the right to act if prohibited literature were found on board their vessels (46). By 1604, the offer had increased: if foreign visitors lived "without scandal in public or in private, in the manner of the inhabitants", they would be left alone (47). The English, however, found this unacceptable. What was "sin escándalo", after all? and did it mean that one objector could have an entire crew put in irons? Despite all the Spanish protestations that the meaning was clear and that its interpretation would be reasonable, the English insisted upon a formal definition. Villamediana and his colleagues were forced to give way, comforting themselves with the thought that, compared with what was at stake, it was a small price to pay (48). They therefore agreed that foreigners who made no open scandal would be unmolested, no matter what they did in private (49).

The second of the difficulties was the recently-imposed Spanish tariff of 30% that affected a wide range of goods (50). The English objected that all but seven of the products that they habitually exported were subject to it, and wished to see its abolition (51). Moreover, Henry IV's recent reply to the tariff - an embargo upon all Spanish and Flemish goods - had obvious repercussions with English carriers (52). Fortunately, this was a concession that the Spanish authorities were prepared to allow. Experience had shewn that the measure, which had been designed to bring the Dutch to their knees,

(46) AGS E2323/139.

(47) AGS E2557/19.

(48) AGS E841/85,86,87.

(49) "Curabunt et providebunt ne ex causâ conscientiâ ubi publicum scandalum non dederint non molestentur nec inquietentur."

(50) qvs pp.59.132.

(51) PRO SP 94/10/25.

(52) AGS E842/101.

was in fact worse than useless (53), and the Council's approval of the delegates' desire to abolish it preceded by only six weeks their decision to revise their commercial strategy altogether (54). But more had been expected of this point, for the Spaniards had hoped to use it to wrest a good number of concessions from the English. In the event, they received nothing. Their efforts to prevent the English from carrying Spanish and Flemish goods to the United Provinces were wholly unsuccessful; neither a system of seals and passports nor a royal proclamation against the practice was acceptable to the English. All that could be obtained was an assurance that England would cease to supply the Dutch with munitions (55).

Potentially the most contentious issue of the negotiations, however, was Spain's desire to maintain her monopoly of trade with the Indies. Villamediana had reported that there was little hope of persuading the English to refrain from making inroads upon Spain's privacy, and that James had told him that his subjects were making £60,000 annually out of their activities (56). As far as he could tell, the English were not likely to launch a great naval offensive upon the New World. James had frowned upon a Dutch offer of help to take Cuba by force, and had told Villamediana that he did not want his subjects to interfere with the areas that Spain had colonized. But his attitude was plain: where there was no colony, there was no monopoly, and England had every right to maintain factories overseas (57).

(53) AGS E623/40.

(54) qvs p.132 ; AGS E2557/19; E2024/61.

(55) AGS E841/45,50; E2557/18.

(56) AGS E842/110 for a full description.

(57) AGS E842/5,9; PRO SP 94/10/25; cf Cornwallis 307: "the strength of this great monarchy consists only in the riches drawn out of the Indies, in the soldiers of Spain and the captains of Italy: the first failing, the second would want arms and the third legs." As a token of this, the Venetian ambassador in Madrid noted in 1586 that, for a while after the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, Philip was thinking more of an expedition to the Indies to eradicate privateering than of a direct assault upon England: CSPV viii 383.



For Spain, this was not enough. Much painful and bloody effort had gone into carving out the empire, and until recently there had been no question of foreign objections. In previous treaties, the question of trade with the Indies had not arisen, for the great growth of English, as of Dutch, maritime enterprise had coincided precisely with the wars of the later sixteenth-century. Now that the testing-time had come, Spain had to argue her case. The best course seemed to be to insist upon a clause that expressly forbade violation of the monopoly, and the first instructions given to the Constable in October, 1603, ordered him to ensure that this was so (58). For a time, nothing less than this was contemplated; even Villamediana, who was keen to see peace concluded, at first thought that he would be justified for breaking off the talks if he could not have his way on this point (59). But a growing appreciation of English obstinacy and of Spain's dire need to end the war moderated Spanish ideas. The English would not agree to an outright prohibition, and the Spaniards could not afford to court disaster by insisting upon making their monopoly de jure as well as de facto. In consequence, it was realized that if the Spanish delegates attempted to persuade the English to comply, and then were forced to back down, the loss of reputation would be considerable (60). The Constable therefore had to find an acceptable solution to the dilemma. In the treaties concluded with England by Charles V in 1542 and 1546, the trade clauses had made no mention of commerce with the Indies, and yet the Spanish monopoly had stood. The wisest course in the present circumstances would surely be to re-enact the same wording: England would have received no permission to trade and Spain would still be free to punish interlopers as she had done in the past (61). The idea was appealing, and the delegates' instructions were amended accordingly (62).

(58) AHN E2798/5.

(59) AGS E841/155; E842/5.

(60) AGS E841/47.

(61) AGS E841/11.

(62) The idea was not original, for the same conclusion seems to have been reached in the Boulogne discussions four years earlier: Winwood i 209, 211.

Even so, it was no easy task to reach agreement. For their part, the English delegates realized that they could not expect to gain explicit approval of their presence in the New World, but this was as much as they would concede. English maritime activity had greatly increased since Charles V's day, and it was felt to be only proper that the terms of the treaty should recognize this (63). They rejected outright a Spanish proposal to permit trade "in all realms where trade is permitted". Above all, one of their number, the Lord High Admiral, Nottingham, was adamant in his refusal to co-operate with the Spaniards. In one of the crucial sessions of the negotiations, just as the latter had wearily agreed to allow both sides to punish interlopers in their respective territories - which meant that they tacitly recognized England's right to have such territories - Nottingham cut in. To the manifest embarrassment of his colleagues, he began to ask awkward questions, producing a map to state his case the more clearly. What right had the King of Spain to forbid English traders access to places where, he alleged, his own vessels had never been - China or Java, for instance? The session was thrown into immediate confusion. Taking their cue from the Admiral, the rest of the English party began to demand more favourable wording, such as would not tie their hands (64). The Admiral's interruption, however, proved to be a blessing in disguise. The wording that the Spanish delegates had proposed was not acceptable to their own superiors either. The Constable insisted that the English were wrong in thinking that where there was no factory there was no monopoly, and that his instructions be followed to the letter: avoid definitions and re-enact the traditional forms. In the end, the English gave way (65). A fortnight

(63) AGS E841/39.

(64) AGS E841/60.

(65) AGS E841/63; cf Barbour 121-2; also PRO SP 94/10/61: Cecil to Parry, 20th June (O.S.) 1604: "Considering our free trade into the Indies east and west we have much pressed the same unto them but find no possibility to obtain it at their hands, and therefore rather than we will admit the least prejudice against it by way of treaty, His Majesty is resolved to pass over that point in silence and to leave it undetermined as it was by the Treaty at Vervins."

later, the Indies question was raised once more at the conference table. The English delegates quoted a Spanish jurist, Hernando de Minchaza, in support of their claim that Spain had no right to prohibit free navigation, and would not listen to the protestation that the New World belonged to the Spanish and Portuguese crowns by right of discovery. For them, the form of words that their opponents insisted upon would signally damage English prestige, the more so since no mention of the Indies had been made in the Treaty of Vervins; and they got up to go, as though the treaty were at an end. All the negotiators were on their feet when somehow - the account of the meeting does not specify how - it was agreed to accept the by now traditional wording. Trade was officially to take place between those possessions that had been customary before the war. Face was saved on both sides (66).

One further point of contention, which in 1600 had been considered essential to the making of peace, passed by without incident. Spain had hoped to recover the three border garrison-towns of Brill, Flushing and Rammekins that England held in pledge from the Dutch, and 400,000 ducats had been earmarked for the purpose (67). Desirable an object as it was, however, in 1604, peace was more desirable. At no stage was peace to depend upon the recovery of the towns and the Spanish delegates were quick to realize that the task would be too difficult (68). The English alleged that James' honour did not permit him to break his word to the Dutch, and that in any case he had no other security for the large debt that the Dutch owed his predecessor, Elizabeth (69). He was not strong enough to force

(66) AGS E841/84: "sea y deba ser libre el comercio en los (sc. territorios) que antes de la guerra lo fue conforme y según el uso y observancia de las antiguas confederaciones y tratados de antes de la guerra"; the Latin phrase used was "limitativas justa usumet observantiam". cf Cecil's opinion, PRO SP 94/10/101; also Salyer, Andrews Caribbean Rivalry... passim.

(67) qvs p. 195.

(68) cf AGS E2557/18.

(69) AGS E841/40; PRO SP 94/10/25.

the burghers to accept Spanish control and, indeed, not enjoying full legal possession could hardly cede the towns to Spain (70). Moreover, on the Spanish side there were disadvantages in re-possession. The army in Flanders was in so bad a state that it might be impossible to find adequate garrisons; and nothing could be worse than, having gained the towns, to lose them again almost at once to the enemy (71). A compromise was needed, and the Spaniards were not slow to find one. If the English could be persuaded to retain the towns for a set period, at the end of which either the Dutch would have paid the debt, or they would have come to terms with Spain, or Spain would have paid off the debt for them and so be able to regain the towns, the honour of both parties would be satisfied. There was a good deal to be said for the arrangement. The Spanish war-effort against the Dutch needed time in which to regain impetus, and the towns would probably be of more use if they were regained in a few years rather than at once (72). Without much difficulty, the delegates drew up a clause that announced James' intention of giving his Dutch allies "adequate time" in which to make up their differences with the Habsburgs: if at the end of this time agreement had not been reached, James would be free to follow the dictates of his conscience in disposing of the three towns (73). The English had no objections to raise. For some time their friendship with the Dutch had been wearing thin, and although he was determined not to abandon his allies utterly, James had no love of rebels (74). As a token, besides this agreement, there were other clauses that were unfavourable to the interests of the United Provinces. Frequent reference was made to the undertaking made by both sides not to aid the rebels of the other, and, as we have seen, the

(70) AGS E841/53.

(71) AGS E2557/18.

(72) AGS E841/50.

(73) BN 2347/229.

(74) Birch 102,137,151; PRO SP 94/10/25; qvs pp 191, 203. Saavedra y Fajardo made the same judgement some forty years later: "ninguna grandeza más peligrosa al reino de Inglaterra (como también a todos los principados) que la de los holandeses, porque le quitan el arbitrio del mar." Idea de un príncipe político-cristiana, empresa xlv.

English agreed to cut off supplies of munitions from the Dutch (75).

The Constable, on hearing that the Indies question had been settled satisfactorily, expressed his great relief, "since this point is substantially the most important for Your Majesty and Your Majesty's realms." (76) What, then, had happened to Spain's concern for the English recusants, to which so much importance had been given in the past? The Constable's words must have slipped out in an unguarded moment, for all the Spanish ministers were officially agreed that the religious issue was by far the most important. Nevertheless, important as it was, no-one expected that Spain would easily have her way. In June, 1601, the Council had decisively rejected the opinion of the leading recusant, Persons, that, rather than attempt to secure in the treaty a clause that gave liberty of worship to the recusants, a resident ambassador in England might well be able to do rather more to improve their lot (77). But two years later, their opinion had changed: to broach the vexed question of religion at the outset would be to jeopardize the entire negotiation. For the sake of Spanish interests as a whole, therefore, her alleged primary objective would have to be put on one side for the moment. The recusants would be better helped "por via de intercesión" than by Spanish intransigence. One of the Council went further and stated in plain terms what was ultimately to be Spain's policy. Ironically, it was the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo:

"There are two ways of helping and protecting Catholics: the way that justice demands, and that demanded by charity. The first affects those who are Your Majesty's vassals and to whom, as such, Your Majesty has a definite obligation. The present case of the English Catholics is a matter of charity and not of justice. If Your Majesty has the forces to go to their protection and defence without detriment to your possessions, it will be thoroughly proper to do so: but if everything has to

(75) qvs p.214.

(76) AGS E841/98.

(77) AGS E2023/48; Alcocer i 131.

be placed into extreme jeopardy by doing so (as evidently would be the case if the war with England were to continue) Your Majesty is not obliged to any such thing, nor to cause a breach over the point of liberty of conscience."

(dijo que había dos maneras de amparar y ayudar a los católicos, una de justicia y otra de caridad; que la primera militicea con los que eran vasallos de VM que por razón de serlo se les tiene diferente obligación: que el caso presente de los católicos de Inglaterra es de caridad y no de justicia, y si VM tiene fuerzas para asistir a su amparo y defensa sin detrimento de sus reinos muy justo será hacerlo pero si esto ha de ser causa de que VM consuma el caudal que le queda y el de sus súbditos y se ponga todo en el último peligro (como evidentemente parece que sería si la guerra con Inglaterra se continuase) no está VM obligado a ello ni a romper por el punto de la libertad de conciencia. (78) )

So strongly did he feel on the matter that he wrote a short note to Secretary Prada after the meeting:

"I ask Your Worship to add to my vote the fact that, since the capture of Oran, the Crown has allowed the Jews the practice of their Law, with the knowledge of the Pope and of the Archbishops of Toledo, who have spiritual jurisdiction over the city."

(suplico a VM añada en mi voto que desde que se ganó Oran se permiten por los reyes judíos en el ejercicio de su ley con sabiduría del papa y de los arzobispos de Toledo que tienen la jurisdicción espiritual en aquella ciudad (79). )

Philip's response seems not to have survived. However, in a letter of 29th September, 1603, Villamediana admitted that he had not needed Albert's advice to defer discussion of religion, for he had gathered as much when he was still in Spain (80). Although there is no direct evidence to support the assertion, it is almost certain that he was referring to the verbal instructions that he had received from Lerma and Franqueza before setting out from Aranjuez. If such was the case, Philip would have substantially agreed with the Archbishop. The time had come to end the dream that the King of Spain was the sword of Roman Catholic Christendom. High-sounding principles were replaced by pious hopes:

(78) AGS E622/144.

(79) AGS E622/146.

(80) AGS E841/155.

"Although Your Majesty is so zealous for the Catholic faith, having inherited it from your glorious ancestors and practising it better than anyone, and although it is good to do all that is possible to introduce it into England, nevertheless this matter demands skill rather than inflexibility; and if total success should prove impossible, partial success should be aimed at, for in this way Our Lord will ordain that in due time our aim will be achieved."

(aunque VM tiene tanto celo a la fe católica por haberla heredado de sus gloriosos progenitores y ejercitarla mejor que nadie y es bien hacer todo lo posible para introducirla en Inglaterra, todavía en esto se debe usar más de maña que de rigor y si no se pudiere encaminar el todo se encamine la parte porque así con el tiempo será nuestro Señor servido que se consiga lo que se pretende... (81). )

The wisdom of this policy quickly became apparent. As he made his unofficial enquiries into the state of religion in England, Villamediana realized that there was very little likelihood of a satisfactory settlement. There was no popular demand for the repeal of the recusancy laws: Parliament was implacably hostile and James' attitude ambivalent (82). Moreover, Villamediana made the surprising discovery that the recusants were in fact fewer and subject to less severe penalties than had for so many years been believed in Spain. They were said to form no more than the twentieth part of the kingdom - a figure that he thought too high-- and they were torn with the rivalry between the Jesuits and the normal secular clergy (83). By the end of January, 1604, he was complaining that during all his stay in England he had not once been visited by a single Roman Catholic of any real standing, and had come to think that none such existed (84). Since James had suspended

(81) AGS E2557/8.

(82) That James did not contemplate any negotiation on this point is clear from the total absence of the recusant question from the instructions given to his commissioners: PRO SP 94/10/25.

(83) AGS E841/141, 154. This was in marked contrast to the inflated claims broadcast by polemics like that of D. de Yepes: Historia particular...

(84) AGS E842/154: "cuanto ha que estoy en este reino no he visto ni ha entrado por mis puertas hombre católico de consideración ni creo que aquí los haya en quien se pueda hacer fundamento ni tenga sustancia para nada."

the collection of recusancy fines and was reported to be telling the recusants at his court to be patient, Villamediana and the other envoys were united in the decision to leave the toleration issue to the Constable; once in London to sign the final treaty, he could do something "más por vía de consideración y gracia" than by means of an explicit clause (85). Admittedly, orders were that, if the talks should break down, religion was to be announced as the Spanish reason for withdrawal. But this was a poor - almost, a pathetic - substitute for the thorough-going demands that had once been envisaged (86).

Moreover, there was no longer any idea of obtaining full liberty of conscience and worship for the recusants. As far as the Constable could see, there was no need to take an extreme position. The Pope was manifestly more anxious for peace than for the extortion of large concessions from the English government, and since England formed no part of Habsburg territories, Philip was not obliged to insist upon more than the Pope. If full religious liberty could not be obtained, the Constable felt, honour would be satisfied with the lifting of the penalties to which the recusants were currently liable (87). So earnest was he in his desire to smooth the path towards agreement that he began to speak strongly against the very seminary priests who had been favoured by Spain for so long. He had come to think that they were their own worst enemies and persisted in their intrigues instead of facing facts as squarely as had the Pope and the Spanish authorities. At an earlier date, such an attitude would have been unthinkable in a man of the Constable's background. But now that there was a real prospect of peace with England, Spain could not afford to offend James and his ministers. The French and the Dutch were eager to inflate the importance of the seminarians' activities into proof of Spanish duplicity, a manoeuvre that had to be

(85) AGS E841/49; E842/72.

(86) AHN E2798/5.

(87) AGS E842/162; AHN E2798/5.



frustrated at all costs (88). In the Council of State, there was some natural reluctance to back down. As Sesa, who had watched over Spain's reputation in Rome for many years, pointed out, unless great care were taken, Elizabeth's old assertion that Spain's help to the recusants came from political, rather than religious, motives would be proved. But Sesa was one of the few who felt that it was worth ending the talks for this point. The rest of the Council, and Philip too, were driven into agreement with the Constable: honour would be satisfied, though barely so, if the recusants were freed from legal sanctions and allowed the private performance of their rites (89).

In the end, the Constable achieved precisely nothing. During his stay in London, he urged James on more than one occasion to shew leniency towards the recusants, and he was not slow to tell Anne that her scheme to marry the Prince of Wales to the Infanta could only be entertained if the former were brought up as a Roman Catholic (90). This, however, was all; and the Treaty of London was signed on 18/28th August without further mention of religious concessions. The Constable still had fits of conscience; after all, much had been promised. It must have been in this state of mind that on 20th November, 1604, he interrupted his journey back to Spain in order to explain himself to his colleagues by letter. He expressed his great annoyance at the rash opinion still held by some that Spain could and should impose a military settlement upon England in order to solve the religious problem. It was a notion with which he now had not the slightest sympathy. If Spain were to help the recusants, her best course was to proceed quietly and secretly with evangelization; in this connexion, much could be expected from the renewal of trade between the two countries. If the seminarians would only avoid political extremism and preach non-resistance, they could do a

(88) AGS E841/49.

(89) AGS E2557/19.

(90) AGS E841/130.

great deal, and he urged his colleagues to take steps to ensure that the seminarians understood the fact. The other grounds for hope were the continued suggestions of a marriage alliance between the two royal houses. In the meantime, there was every indication that the recusants' lot was not too hard. James had claimed that he had no desire for blood, and, indeed, had shewn distinct signs of good-will towards his Roman Catholic subjects: recusancy fines were not collected, imprisoned seminarians were allowed to celebrate Mass in their cells instead of going to the gallows, and recusant courtiers were high in the King's favour. The Constable strongly believed that it was only reason of state that stopped James from granting outright toleration, for throughout the negotiations, he had helped to remove many obstacles and had shewn himself "a friend of justice, tranquil, learned, occupied in virtue and well-disposed towards Spain." (91) With this Spain would have to be content.

The final text of the treaty was generally well-received in Valladolid. The Council complained that the clause dealing with English traders' future relations with the Inquisition seemed to grant liberty of conscience and that commercial interests were taking precedence over those of religion; indeed, had not the Constable already ratified the terms, there might have been further difficulties in reaching agreement with England (92). But this was their only objection. The compromise over the Dutch towns was acceptable (93); and the 30% tariff was declared inapplicable to English vessels on 12th November (94). Even the arrangement on trade with the Indies was well-received, for the Constable had secretly arranged with James that a royal proclamation would forbid the King's subjects from contravening the monopoly and would also recognize Spain's right to punish

(91) BN 6949/115.

(92) AGS E2557/21.

(93) *ibid.*

(94) AGS E2847/sf.

interlopers (95). Still more notable was their apparent satisfaction with the manifest lack of a religious settlement. No-one seems to have found it intolerable that more effort had been made to conserve the Indies monopoly than to secure liberty of conscience for the recusants. What, in the end, had Spain achieved by the Treaty of London? Just peace: and she was glad enough of that (96).

- (95) AGS E841/60,138,89: "Copia del capítulo sobre la navegación de las Indias: Fiat declaratio qualiter serenissimus Rex Angliae &c. declarat non posse nec debere subditos suos vasallos ac incolas cujuscunque condicionis fuerit navigare neque adire ad Indias orientales et occidentales serenissimi Hispaniarum Regi quomodocunque subditos ac expectantes nec ad alias quas cunque Indiarum orientalium et occidentalium et seu nove orbis additiones adius et jurisdictionem diti serenissimi Hispaniarum Regis quomodolibet pertinentes habebit que propterea ditus serenissimus Rex Hispaniarum ejusque subditi ac vasalli liberam facultatem quoscunque contravenientes capiendi puniendi et debitis poenis coercendi." James, however, was to play false: cf CSPV x 291.
- (96) In July, 1605, a Spanish notable observed to the new English ambassador in Valladolid, Cornwallis, that "the King and councillors of England had not their senses when in such sort they agreed" to the treaty. Cornwallis, having seen the exhausted state of Spain, was inclined to agree: Winwood ii 75.

### CONCLUSION

The effect of the policies analyzed in this thesis is generally considered to have been a reversal of the grand imperial policy of the second half of the sixteenth century. But perhaps it is better regarded as the inevitable culmination. The imperial mentality had made Spain assume a bewildering variety of commitments, now financed with increasing difficulty, and her rulers were never able to implement in their fullness the programme and the ideology that they instinctively believed to be right and natural: foreign policy between 1596 and 1604 may be described as the politics of the pis aller. Plans had to be cut - gradually and with great reluctance - to the bone. We may therefore see Spain's conscious priority emerging in its starkness: the defeat of the Dutch rebels and the eventual re-establishment of Roman Catholic worship in their territories. All was to be subordinated to this end: military reprisals for French provocation, the punishment of England's impudence in matters religious and commercial, a Crusade against the Turk and the possible extension of Spanish influence into the eastern Mediterranean. The old ideals admittedly still lived on. As we have seen, it was still firmly believed in official circles that Spain would live to fight another day: the Treaty of Vervins did not bring into being a "generación de 98". The monopoly of the Indies was jealously guarded still, even though a considerable concession was in effect made to the English by leaving so much unsaid in the Treaty of London. Above all, the religious motive was still said to retain its pristine importance. But by its very nature, Christianity can never be a part of the life of the believer, not even the most important part: rather, it must impart a new dimension to all the facets of that life, permeating every thought and activity. Because of its protean nature, it is therefore perhaps unwise to speak of the religious content of Spanish policy. Despite occasional fears of falling into hypocrisy, the authorities, as we have seen, could believe

there to be no inconsistency in making peace with the politique King of France or with the Protestant King of England. Had they possessed the same scriptural knowledge as many of their enemies, they might have quoted approvingly S. Paul's phrase: "deceivers,<sup>and</sup> yet true" (1). At some stage in the future, it was expected, Spain would be able to speak clearly once more: but until then, she had to content herself with compromise so as to be able to regain her strength. Whether this belief was indeed hypocritical is not for us to judge.

Such as it was, the policy seemed to have met with a certain success. In Italy, French influence had been curbed (though as much through Henry's weakness as for any other cause); the accession of the pacific James I in England removed another preoccupation; and the situation in the Low Countries was, miraculously, contained. But apart from the smallness of these few triumphs, the policy was a failure for another, and as yet unperceived, reason. "True reputation," the Council had once remarked, "consists in getting one's way," still believing as they did that the chief aim was the winning of the war against the Dutch (2). In fact, stripped to its barest essentials, the true aim was the conservation of reputation itself. Admittedly, in the context of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (not to say that of our own) pride was the life-blood of a nation. Saavedra y Fajardo, writing in the middle of the reign of Philip IV, could still praise his master's grandfather on this score:

"even when one sees before one's eyes the ruination of one's states, it is better to lose them than to lose reputation: for without the latter, the former can never be regained."

(Aun cuando se ve a los ojos la ruina de los estados es mejor dejarlos perder que perder la reputación, porque sin ella no se pueden recuperar (3). )

(1) II Corinthians vi 8.

(2) qvs p. 212.

(3) Saavedra empresa xxxi.

But later events were to shew that Spain had lost reputation and political greatness alike. Pride had prevented her from facing facts squarely: she had outgrown her strength. Negotiations with Henry IV took three valuable years, and those with England ten. Above all, the dead-weight of the Dutch war, the cause of most of her material misfortunes, was given pride of place instead of being discarded. Pride also blinded her to the profound fact that she did not possess the sole monopoly of truth, sincerity and moral probity - which may have been the essence of her failure. Perhaps John Buchan's character, Dickson McCunn, expressed it best in words that surely deserve to be immortal: "without humour, you cannot run a sweetie-shop, let alone a nation." (4)

(4) Castle Gay, London & Edinburgh, 1932, p.377.

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